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# Booklist Reader

Booklist
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May 2023

Book and audiobook recommendations for all ages

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**The Essentials: Tales of Hawaii Then and Now**

**Must Listen: High-Action History on Audio**

**The Essentials: Hidden Histories**

**A Conversation: Sabaa Tahir**


Art from *The Covenant of Water*, by Abraham Verghese

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# Booklist Reader

May 2023
Volume 2, Issue 9

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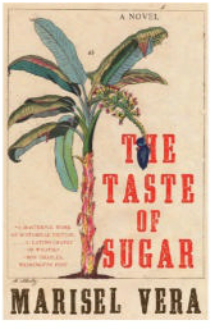


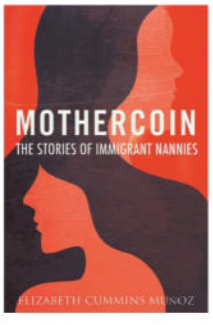


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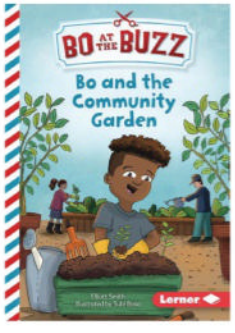

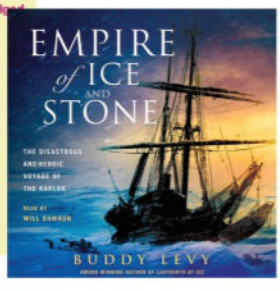


### On the Cover

From *The Covenant of Water,* by Abraham Verghese, which received a starred review in the March 15, 2023 issue of *Booklist*. Jacket design/artwork by Kelly Winton, adapted from the watercolor, *Palmyra Palm Trees,* by H. Schlagintweit, 1855 (Public Domain/Wellcome Collection). Used with permission of the publisher, Grove Press.

## From the Editor & Publisher

I'm thrilled to announce *Booklist Reader*'s partnership with PBS Books. Beginning with this issue, our collaboration adds a multimedia dimension to *Booklist Reader,* keeping our readers informed about must-watch author interview videos, offering details about online events and panels, and showcasing exciting PBS series and their companion book talks.

Aligned with our efforts to highlight diverse reading recommendations for readers of all ages, this partnership reinforces our joint commitment to libraries as public spaces that support culture, community, and creativity, and enriches the experiences of all who love books.

With *Booklist Reader*'s world-class features and lists, LibraryReads' best lists, and PBS Books content, *Booklist Reader* brings libraries and library patrons exceptional reading resources and recommendations.

*—George Kendall*
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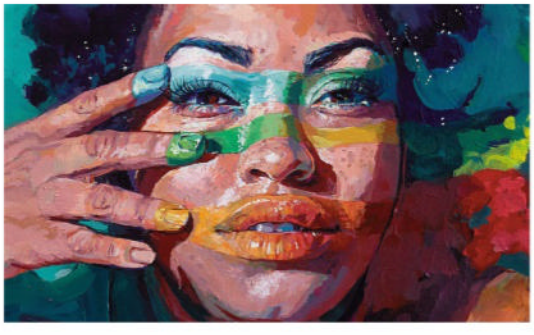

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*Booklist* is a book-review magazine that has been published by the American Library Association for more than 100 years and is widely viewed as offering the most reliable reviews to help libraries decide what to buy and to help library patrons and students decide what to read, view, or listen to.

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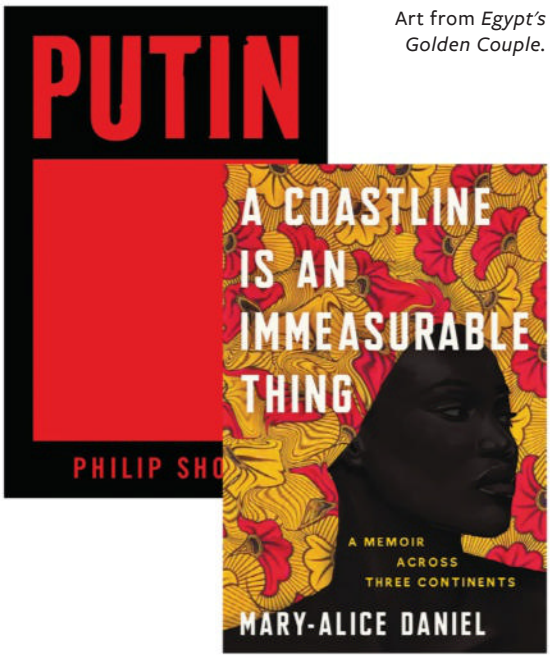
Top 10

# History Books

These history titles offer fresh takes on such compelling subjects as a power couple in ancient Egypt, American cultural infrastructure, and WWI.




Art from *Egypt's Golden Couple.*

**Always Faithful:** A Story of the War in Afghanistan, the Fall of Kabul, and the Unshakable Bond between a Marine and an Interpreter. By Thomas Schueman and Zainullah Zaki. 2022. Morrow.

A U.S. marine and a Pashtun military interpreter recount the stories of their lives and their friendship forged while fighting the Taliban in Helmand province.

**American Midnight:** A Great War, a Violent Peace, and Democracy's Forgotten Crisis. By Adam Hochschild. 2022. Mariner.

Hochschild illuminates overlooked aspects of life on the home front during WWI, including the violent demonization of German Americans, labor unions, Black Americans, conscientious objectors, and socialists.

**Blunt Instruments:** Recognizing Racist Cultural Infrastructure in Memorials, Museums, and Patriotic Practices. By Kristin Hass. 2022. Beacon.

Hass' ultra-compelling critique reveals how memorials, museums, flags, and anthems, erstwhile celebrations of liberty, are actually vehicles for racism and white supremacy.

**A Coastline Is an Immeasurable Thing:** A Memoir across Three Continents. By Mary-Alice Daniel. 2022. Ecco.

Forced to leave Nigeria, Daniel and her family landed in England in 1988, then in Tennessee. As she reflects on each place, Daniel examines Nigerian history, "otherness," race, religion, and identity.

**Egypt's Golden Couple:** When Akhenaten and Nefertiti Were Gods on Earth. By John Darnell and Colleen Darnell. 2022. St. Martin's.

Egyptologists John and Colleen Darnell vividly portray Akhenaten and Nefertiti (parents of the Boy King, Tutankhamen), recounting how they revolutionized Egyptian society during their 17-year reign.

**In Whose Ruins:** Power, Possession, and the Landscapes of American Empire. By Alicia Puglionesi. 2022. Scribner.

Focusing on Virginia, Pennsylvania, and New Mexico, Puglionesi delves into how white settlers ruptured Native peoples' deep ties to the land, claiming it for their own capitalistic gain.

**No Right to an Honest Living:** The Struggles of Boston's Black Workers in the Civil War Era. By Jacqueline Jones. Jan. 2023. Basic.

Antebellum-era Boston was central to the nineteenth-century antislavery movement, yet Black people faced hostilities and discrimination there long after slavery was abolished.

**Putin.** By Philip Short. 2022. Holt.

Short mines Russian autocrat Vladimir Putin's past, tracking how his opaque leadership style is shaped by his security and intelligence work and how he regards his invasion of Ukraine as "unfinished business" many years in the making.

**Sinkable:** Obsession, the Deep Sea, and the Shipwreck of the Titanic. By Daniel Stone. 2022. Dutton.

Stone looks at the iconic *Titanic* from a new perspective, focusing on its remains, immersing readers in the science of shipwrecks, and examining the disaster's coverage by African American journalists.

**We Are the Middle of Forever:** Indigenous Voices from Turtle Island on the Changing Earth. By Stan Rushworth and Dahr Jamail. 2022. New Press.

Native Nations academics, artists, activists, and community leaders share their historical and environmental knowledge to deepen the debate over how to address the climate change crisis.

Art from *The Edge of Anarchy.*

The Essentials

# Working History

**by Donna Seaman**

These compelling and informative inquiries shed light on various facets of the ongoing struggle for workers' rights, beginning with enslaved laborers and venturing into the history of labor unions, a subject that remains pressingly relevant as we contend with current economic inequities and significant worker concerns across the job spectrum.

**Beaten Down, Worked Up:** The Past, Present, and Future of American Labor. By Steven Greenhouse. 2019. Knopf.

Greenhouse looks back to the tragic Triangle Shirtwaist Company fire, FDR's Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins, and the impact of sit-down strikes, while assessing the dramatic decline of labor unions and considering new workers' movements.

**Behemoth:** A History of the Factory and the Making of the Modern World. By Joshua B. Freeman. 2018. Norton.

Freeman follows the growth of factories to today's sprawling "behemoths," tracing the evolution of manufacturing processes and working conditions and contrasting factories' undeniable benefits with their negative social and environmental impacts.

**Beyond $15:** Immigrant Workers, Faith Activists, and the Revival of the Labor Movement. By Jonathan Rosenblum. 2017. Beacon.

Rosenblum sets the first successful $15-minimum-wage battle in Seattle-Tacoma International Airport in 2013 within the history of labor activism.

**The Bone and Sinew of the Land:** America's Forgotten Black Pioneers & the Struggle for Equality. By Anna-Lisa Cox. 2018. PublicAffairs.

Cox reveals that Black pioneers were active from the time of the American Revolution, creating 300 settlements in the Northwest Territory as successful farmers, traders, and craftspeople until racist whites enacted fiendish legal maneuvers to deprive them of their rights and achievements.

**The Chinese Question:** The Gold Rushes and Global Politics. By Mae Ngai. 2021. Norton.

Historian Ngai brings to light the daunting lives of immigrant, nineteenth-century, gold rush Chinese miners who labored around the world after gold was discovered in California in 1848 and soon after in Australia and South Africa.

**A Collective Bargain:** Unions, Organizing, and the Fight for Democracy. By Jane McAlevey. 2020. Ecco.

McAlevey reintroduces the idea that labor unions can help redress the vast economic disparity between the superrich and the underpaid, underserved workers who create that wealth, tracking corporate efforts to undermine the union movement over the past 70 years.

**The Dawn of Detroit:** A Chronicle of Slavery and Freedom in the City of the Straits. By Tiya Miles. 2017. New Press.

Miles' award-winning account of slavery's foundational role in the rise of Detroit illuminates the lives of the "unfree" along with the political ideologies, major events, and historical figures that shaped their world from 1760 to 1815.

**The Devil Is Here in These Hills:** West Virginia's Coal Miners and Their Battle for Freedom. By James Green. 2015. Grove.

Green documents the many power struggles and violent

workers'-rights battles coal has triggered in West Virginia, while also portraying such unionizing champions as the legendary Mary Harris "Mother" Jones.

**The Edge of Anarchy:** The Railroad Barons, the Gilded Age, and the Greatest Labor Uprising in America. By Jack Kelly. 2019. St. Martin's.

In 1894, workers at the Pullman Palace Car Company near Chicago, led by the indomitable Eugene V. Debs, rebelled against oppressive working and living conditions and went on strike, setting off the greatest labor action in U.S. history.

**Fight like Hell:** The Untold History of American Labor. By Kim Kelly. 2022. Atria.

Kelly looks back to the early days of U.S. industrialization, beginning with the mill girls of Rhode Island and Massachusetts in 1824 and moving forward to highlight events involving other exploited groups, including Indigenous, Black, Hispanic, and Asian American women.

**Grown-Up Anger:** The Connected Mysteries of Bob Dylan, Woody Guthrie, and the Calumet Massacre of 1913. By Daniel Wolff. 2017. Harper.

Bob Dylan's "Like a Rolling Stone" led Wolff to Woody Guthrie's "1913 Massacre," a song about the death of 73 striking copper miners on Christmas Eve, 1913, in Calumet, Michigan; further connections involve the activist-martyr Joe Hill, the Industrial Workers of the World, the Works Progress Administration, and the civil rights movement.

**A History of America in Ten Strikes.** By Erik Loomis. 2018. New Press.

This concise history focuses on 10 labor strikes from the nineteenth century on, each an encounter between capitalists and workers that tells a broader story as Loomis underscores critical roles played by women and people of color.

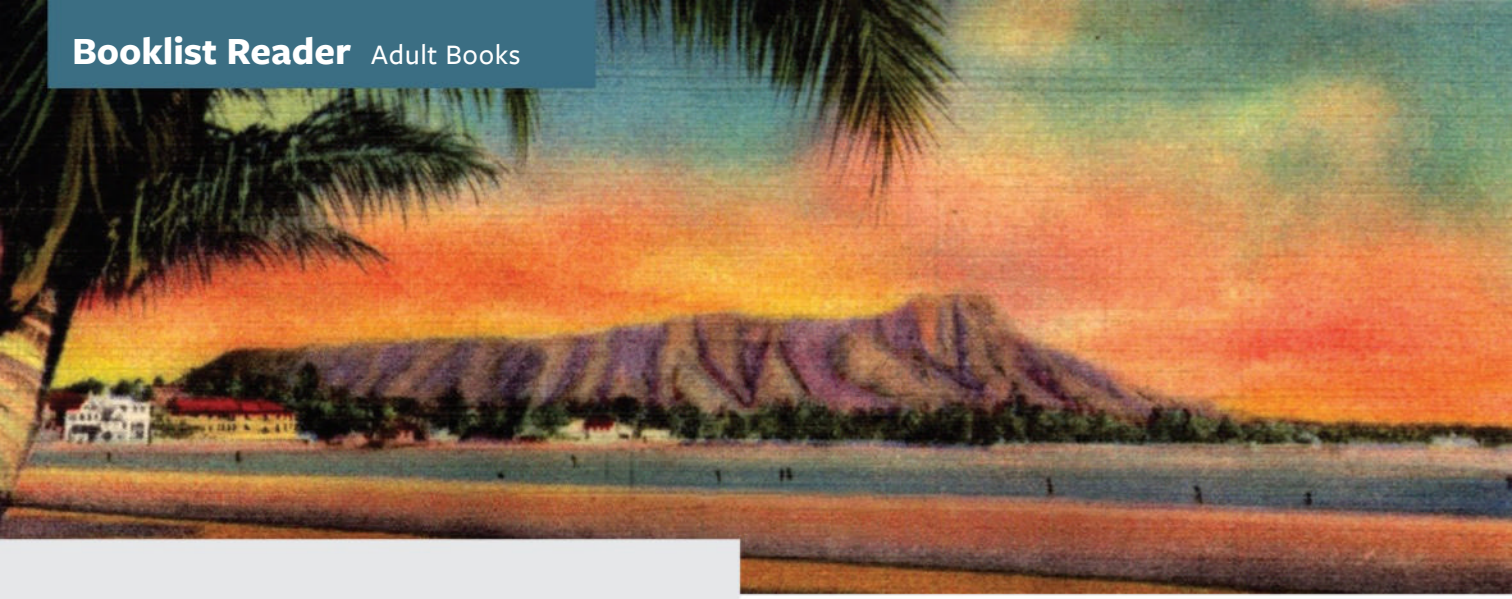
**The Republic for Which It Stands:** The United States during Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, 1865–1896. By Richard White. 2017. Oxford.

White incisively chronicles the crushing three decades following the Civil War, examining how industrialization upended the work world while African Americans were robbed of their hard-won freedoms and Native Americans were forced off their homelands.

**To the Promised Land:** Martin Luther King and the Fight for Economic Justice. By Michael K. Honey. 2018. Norton.

In 1968, Martin Luther King Jr. went to Memphis, where he was killed, to support striking sanitation workers as part of his commitment to economic justice, which is Honey's focus in this in-depth account of King's Poor People's Campaign.

Art from *Beyond $15.*



Art from *Color of the Sea.*

The Essentials

# Tales of Hawaii Then and Now

**By Donna Seaman**

Hawaii had been home to humans for millennia before Europeans arrived in the late-eighteenth century, leading to occupation and exploitation of the land and its people on plantations, catalyzing immigration from Asia and Puerto Rico. In spite of the objections of Hawaiians, the islands were annexed by the U.S. in 1898. A territory when Pearl Harbor was attacked in 1941, Hawaii became the nation's fiftieth state in 1959, and its most diverse, a microcosm of Asian American and Pacific Islander heritage which is celebrated each May. The novels below, both historical and contemporary, illuminate many resonant facets of Hawaiian life.

**Behold the Many.** By Lois-Ann Yamanaka. 2006. Picador.
A mystical and, at times, macabre world unfolds in Yamanaka's tale of three sisters afflicted with tuberculosis, which is ravaging Hawaii. Only Anah survives, and she is haunted by the ghosts of her lost family.

**The Codebreaker's Secret.** By Sara Ackerman. 2022. MIRA.
In alternating story lines about the only female codebreaker assigned to Hawaii in 1943 and a journalist covering the celebrity-studded opening of a luxury resort in 1965, Ackerman brings the lush and rugged beauty of the islands to life along with the complexities of cultural and class divides and the mysterious disappearances of two young women.

**The Color of Air.** By Gail Tsukiyama. 2020. HarperVia.
Lives reconverge under pressure in 1935, in Hilo, Hawaii. Koji, a once legendary sugarcane cutter who emigrated from Japan as a boy, is mourning Mariko, the love of his life. Also grieving is Mariko's closest friend, while Mariko's long-absent son returns just as the enormous volcano, Mauna Loa, reawakens and demonstrates its explosive power.

**Color of the Sea.** By John Hamamura. 2006. Anchor.
Born in Hawaii to Japanese parents, Sam Hamada doesn't become a plantation worker like his father; he attends college on the mainland. When Japan and the U.S. go to war, he is drafted and the Japanese American woman he loves is incarcerated in an internment camp.

**Daughter of Moloka'i.** By Alan Brennert. 2019. Griffin.
Brennert's best-selling *Moloka'i* (2003) told the story of Rachel Kalama, a native Hawaiian sent to a leper colony. This novel begins in 1917 and focuses on Ruth, the baby Rachel and her Japanese husband were forced to give up, as she navigates prejudice against her mixed heritage.

**Diamond Head.** By Cecily Wong. 2015. HarperPerennial.
Shipping magnate Frank Leong leaves early-twentieth-century China with his family, settling in Hawaii and setting in motion a multigenerational, culturally illuminating Hawaiian saga of privilege, deception, and loyalty.

**Nuclear Family.** By Joseph Han. 2022. Counterpoint.
Grace and Jacob are Korean Hawaiian on their father's side (three Cho generations are currently islanders); maternally, they are both South and North Korean. College senior Grace lives at home and works at their parents' Cho's Delicatessen. Jacob recently moved to Korea to teach English and reunite with extended family, but his

estranged late grandfather has taken possession of his body and havoc ensues for everyone.

**The Partition.** By Don Lee. 2022. Akashic.

Lee questions identity, unlikely relationships, deception, truth, and fleeting connections in his richly realized short stories, while the novella, "Les hôtels d'Alain," follows an untethered Korean Hawaiian teen through contented-enough middle age.

**The Picture Bride.** By Lee Geum-yi. Tr. by An Seonjae. 2022. Forge.

Lee Geum-yi delivers a story of three Korean picture brides, young women who have only seen a photograph of their husbands-to-be and who journey to Hawaii, where their marriages set the unpredictable courses of their lives in a beautiful novel rich in historical detail about Korean immigrants.

**Shadow Child.** By Rahna Reiko Rizzuto. 2018. Grand Central.

In a family drama punctuated by volcanoes, tsunamis, and war, Hana escapes the demons that haunted her during her 1950s childhood in a Hawaiian village, but when her twin sister joins her in New York, they must confront the suffering of their mother in a Japanese American internment camp and in Japan after the bombing of Hiroshima.

**Sharks in the Time of Saviors.** By Kawai Strong Washburn. 2020. Farrar/MCD.

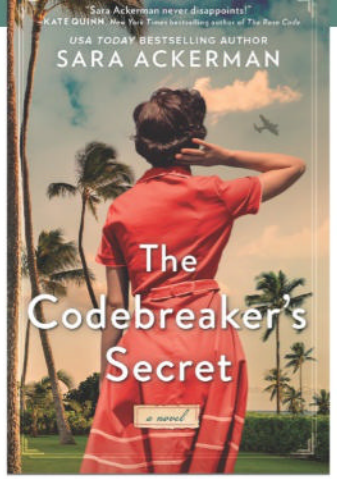
Augie and Malia are raising three children in their native Hawaii: basketball prodigy Dean, free spirit Kaui, and miracle son Nainoa, who fell into the ocean during a boat ride in childhood and was saved by benevolent sharks, leaving him with allegedly magical powers and a burdensome legend to live up to.

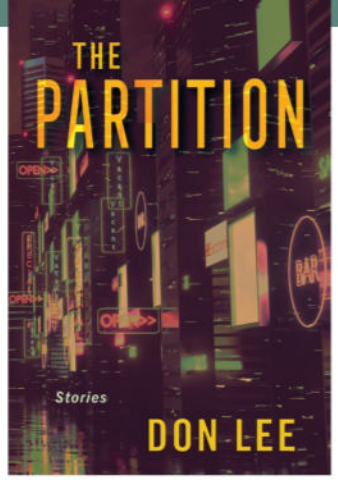
**The Taste of Sugar.** By Marisel Vera. 2020. Norton/Liveright.

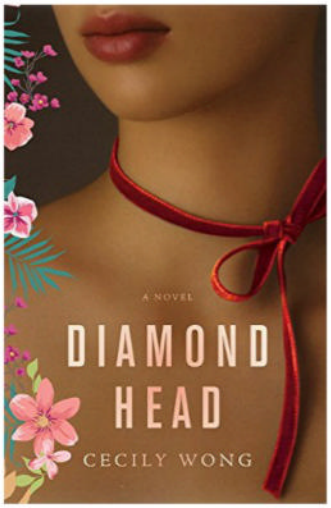
The Vega family worked hard on a coffee plantation on Puerto Rico at the close of the twentieth century only to be hit by injustice and a devastating hurricane, which induces them to heed the siren call of sugarcane-plantation recruiters and migrate to Hawaii where they face ruthless exploitation.

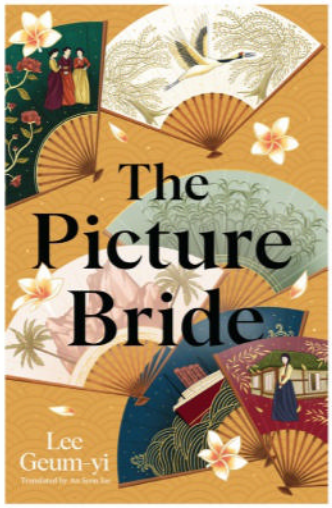
**Vanishing Acts.** By Jaimee Wriston Colbert. 2018. Fomite.

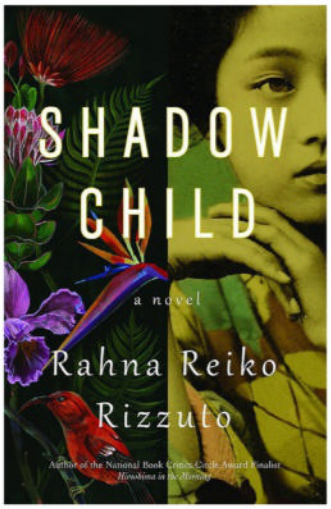
A man who blames himself for his mother's early death disappears while surfing off the coast of Hawaii in just one of many vanishing acts, including species nearing extinction, Hawaii-born and raised Colbert summons in this imaginative and compassionate tale revealing the cauldron of injustice boiling behind Hawaii's paradisiacal façade.

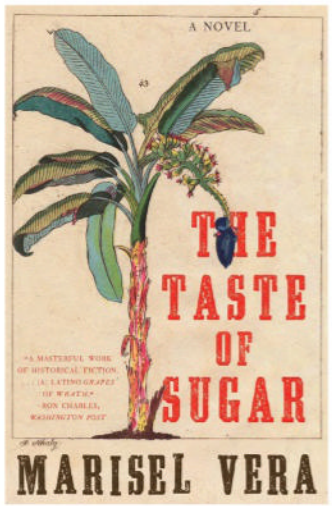


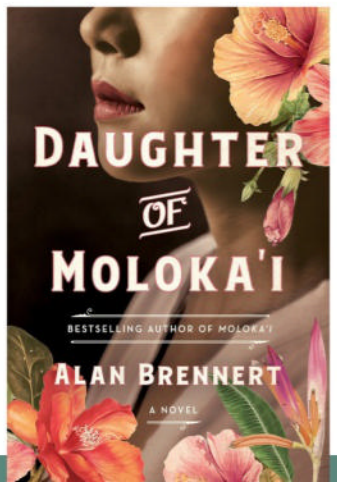



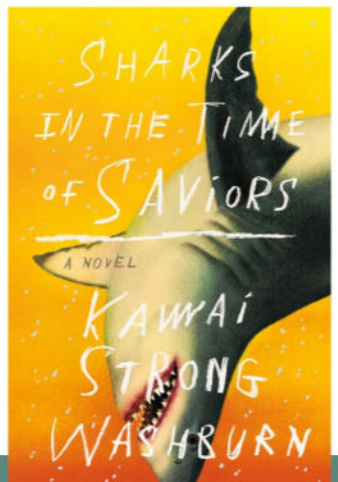



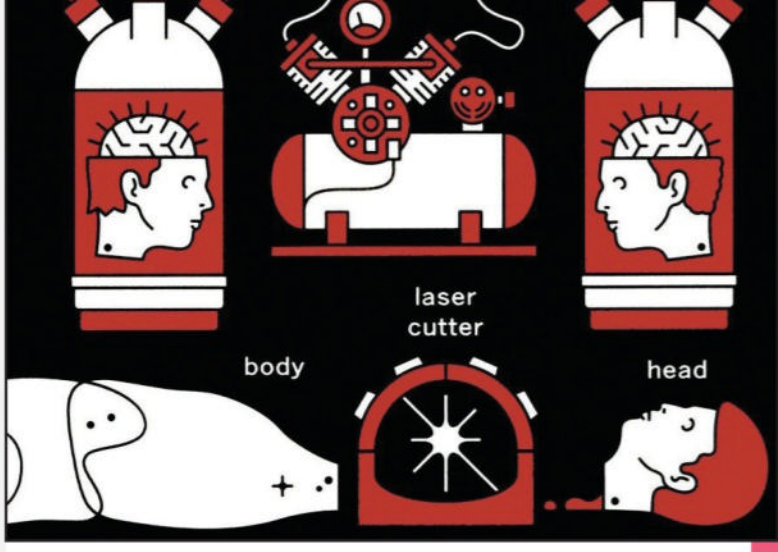



The Essentials

# Japanese Graphic Horror

**by Terry Hong**

I can't watch scary movies, but I love graphic horror on the page. And really, fearmongering via Japanese manga—both series and stand-alones—promises some of the most affecting fright fests.




Art from *The Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service* and *Limit*.

**Death Note.** By Tsugumi Ohba. Art by Takeshi Obata. Tr. by Tetsuichiro Miyaki. 2005–11. Viz Media. (12 vols.).

The omnipotent Death Note bestows genius high-school student Light Yagami the power to control death. Initially, he just rids the world of the most heinous criminals. But that's not enough, especially as his power grows with the assistance of Ryuk, the Death Note's Shinigami ("death god"). Murder rates rocket, but Light's ultimate utopian vision means he won't let anyone or anything stand in his way.

**Helter Skelter:** Fashion Unfriendly. By Kyoko Okazaki. Art by the author. 2013. Vertical.

Meet Liliko, a supermodel made possible with the latest scientific (and illegal) enhancements. She's been carved, sculpted, assembled by "Mama," but Liliko is no malleable, voiceless shell. And she's determined to enjoy her public adoration to the absolute max, using and abusing other people's bodies while she can.

**Ikigami:** The Ultimate Limit. By Motoro Mase. Art by the author. Tr. by John Werry. 2005–12. Viz Media. (10 vols.)

One in 1,000 first-graders receives a fatal nanocapsule in his or her mandatory immunization to "make people value life." Notice of death is delivered via ikigami ("death paper") to the victim, aged 18–24, exactly 24 hours before the predetermined moment of death. Interwoven with episodes featuring ikigami victims' final days is an account of messenger Kengo Fujimoto's troubled tenure delivering death for the National Welfare system.

**The Kurosagi Corpse Delivery Service.** By Eiji Ōtsuka. Art by Housui Yamazaki.Tr. by Toshifumi Yoshida. 2002–15. Dark Horse Comics. (14 vols.)

Five Buddhist university students band together to help the dead: Numata finds the dead; Karatsu talks to the dead; Sasaki hacks background information about the dead; Makino preserves the dead; and Yata's sock puppet provides the lone voice of reason. Irreverent dark humor—with plenty of gore—fills these otherworldly volumes as the five help suffering souls find everlasting peace.

**Limit.** By Keiko Suenobu. Art by the author. Tr. by Mari Morimoto. 2012–16. Vertical. (6 vols.)

Konno's class is the last to set out for its "exchange camp." Their bus crashes en route into a deep ravine. After Konno struggles out of the carnage, she eventually finds four other survivors. All social pretenses are stripped away, and the most bullied, tormented girl holds a deadly sickle in her hands, ready for revenge. *Limit* throws the girls into a brutal twenty-first-century *Lord of the Flies*.

**Lovesickness.** By Junji Ito. Art by the author. Tr. by Jocelyne Allen. 2019. Viz Media.

The titular "Lovesickiness"—one of five stories here—introduces "crossroads fortunes," which involve standing at an intersection and asking the first passing stranger to answer a question about future love. Middle-schooler Ryusuke is convinced his six-year-old self caused a desperate pregnant woman's death. Eight years later, an irresistible specter in black is inspiring multiplying suicides and Ryusuke fights to stay alive.

**Mail.** By Housui Yamazaki. Art by the author. Tr. by Douglas Vernas. 2006–07. Dark Horse. (3 vols.)

When Reiji Akiba has his sight restored, he also gains the ability to see a whole other dimension, populated by suffering souls damned to wander until someone can guide them to eternal peace. With the help of his trusty Kagutsuchi, a supernatural gun that sends the undead to final rest, Akiba reclaims the living from certain fatality.

# Writer's Backstory

## Breaking Boundaries

**by Crystal Hana Kim**

In 2015, while writing my first novel, I was also teaching academic-essay writing to socioeconomically disadvantaged high-school students, many of whom were hoping to be the first in their family to go to college. While guiding my students through the college-application process, what I noticed most was their pervasive fear that despite their stellar grades, accomplishments, and all the obstacles they had overcome, they didn't belong in higher education. One day in October, my student Cherise sent me this note: *Ms. Kim, Do I want to go to college? Am I even good enough? Is this even worth it? What in the world? I feel like I am never going to make it because I am just not that good enough.*

Cherise's note devastated me. Her questions showed that despite how brilliant, compassionate, and accomplished my students were, they couldn't resist this nagging uncertainty. I understood them; I knew this uncertainty myself. When it came to my writing, I often felt unsure about my own place in the literary world. As I wrote about Haemi, a young Korean refugee who flees her home at the outbreak of the Korean War, a small yet firm voice asked: *Will anyone want to read about a rural, uneducated female protagonist in a wartime narrative? Will anyone care about my all-Korean cast of characters set during "the Forgotten War"?*

Due to my own experiences, when my students asked me if they were *good enough*, I understood the weight and taste of their fears, though our circumstances were different. My students are disenfranchised, marginalized, and often told in direct and indirect ways that they will not make it. From the South Side of Chicago to rural Georgia to border towns in Texas, my students are from all over the U.S. Systemic racial, economic, and gender oppression has reiterated that college for teens like them is unlikely at best. At the most basic level, they do not *see* people who look like them go to college.

I quickly learned that one of my most important jobs as their teacher was to show that I believed in them. We discussed imposter syndrome and the lack of representation in the educational and professional fields they aspired to join. Then we discussed how that lack of representation was precisely why *they* needed to be the ones to break those boundaries.

As I saw my students' confidence grow, a change occurred within me, too. Just as a lack of representation had instilled a fear of inauthenticity in my students, the lack of diversity in publishing had planted doubt in me as well. I had grown up reading strong female characters—Anne Shirley, Jo March, Dicey Tillerman, to name a few—but these characters and their authors did not share my background, race, or culture. I did not read a book written by an Asian American author until college—not because I didn't want to but because I didn't know where to find them. Once I realized where my doubt was coming from, my determination grew. Instead of being daunted by the idea of diversifying literature, I became excited. I returned to my manuscript renewed, my mentality changed. I deepened my knowledge through research and committed to writing a complex, rich novel that delved into questions about the female body, motherhood, the Korean War, and family. I found literary heroes I could turn to for inspiration, and most important, I returned to the page.

In August 2018, my debut novel was published. In what felt like an immeasurably lucky windfall, *If You Leave Me* shared the shelves with a slew of other Asian American writers' books, from Lucy Tan's *What We Were Promised* to Nicole Chung's *All We Can Ever Know*. What a summer of astonishing debuts! As I eagerly read these books, I noticed how distinctive our narratives were. Yes, I thought. *Look at this diversity, even within the category of Asian American literature. We are broadening and pushing these boundaries.*

I hope that together we will show readers of all backgrounds that our world is large and expansive, that we may learn from each other, always.

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**Crystal Hana Kim** is the author of *If You Leave Me,* which was a *Booklist* Editor's Choice title and named a best book of 2018 by more than a dozen publications. Kim is the recipient of the 2022 National Book Foundation's 5 Under 35 Award and is a 2017 PEN/Robert J. Dau Short Story Prize winner. She is the Visiting Assistant Professor at Queens College and a contributing editor at *Apogee Journal*.

Art from *Remedies for Sorrow.*

The Essentials

# Family Life & Parenting

## True Stories and How-To's

**by Donna Seaman**

Family is the wellspring of life, but familial relationships are complicated and often difficult, while laws, schools, childcare, health care, and employers are not always just, accessible, affordable, or supportive. The ardent authors of these guides to family challenges and parenting offer readers personal experience, valuable information, pragmatic advice, and lots of encouragement.

**Advanced Parenting:** Advice for Helping Kids Through Diagnoses, Differences, and Mental Health Challenges. By Kelly Fradin. 2023. Grand Central/Balance.

Drawing on her years of experience as a complex-care pediatrician, Fradin provides an outstanding guide for parents seeking authoritative, commonsense help with the skills and strategies required to support children with serious, complicated, and chronic health challenges.

**Fat Talk:** Parenting in the Age of Diet Culture. By Virginia Sole-Smith. 2023. Holt.

This paradigm-shifting book gathers journalist Sole-Smith's findings from countless studies and journals and her own career-spanning interviews to flip the script on diet culture and anti-fat bias as she covers topics ranging from myths about fatness to how diet culture manifests within family units and the influences of youth sports and social media on kids' perception of their bodies.

**The Good Life:** Lessons from the World's Longest Scientific Study of Happiness. By Robert Waldinger and Marc Schulz. 2023. Simon & Schuster.

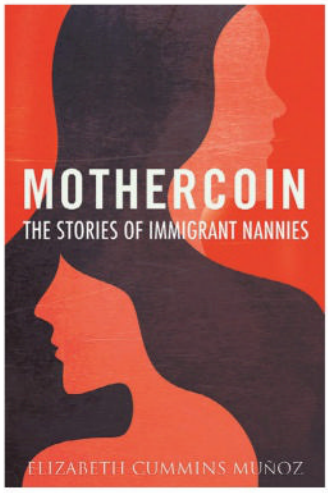
Since 1938, the Harvard Study of Adult Development has tracked the lives of 724 participants (268 Harvard students and 456 inner-city Boston teens, all male and white) and their descendants (including women). Pouring through the collected data, the authors discerned that whether the participants became scholars, blue-collar workers, or served in the military, they pointed to successful relationships rather than money earned as an indicator of their overall happiness.

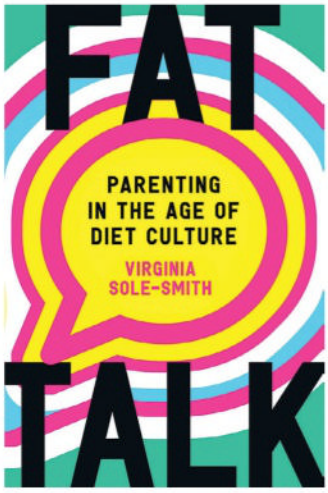
**A Minor Revolution:** How Prioritizing Kids Benefits Us All. By Adam Benforado. 2023. Crown.

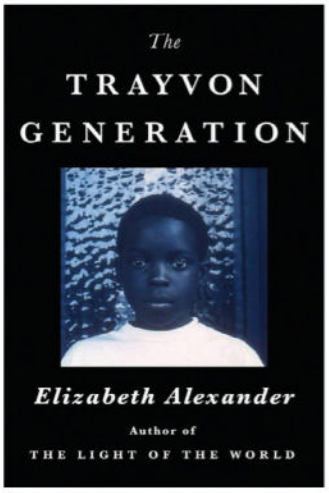
The U.S. doesn't guarantee Americans paid time off to care for a newborn or adopted child; over 400,000 kids are in the foster care system, and hundreds of thousands of children who are U.S. citizens have had their parents deported. Making excellent use of history and statistics, Benforado compellingly argues that all Americans would be better off if the country treated its littlest inhabitants well.

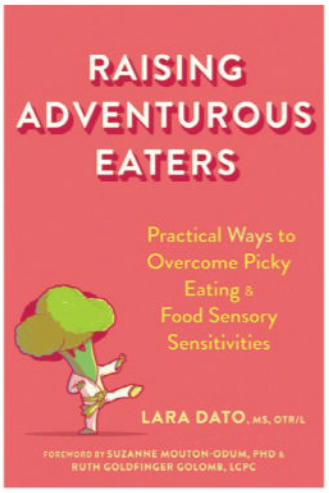
**Mothercoin:** The Stories of Immigrant Nannies. By Elizabeth Cummins Muñoz. 2022. Beacon.

Muñoz spoke with migrant childcare workers, primarily from Latin America, employed by American families, women who are juggling the demands of being a loving





RAISING ADVENTUROUS EATERS
Practical Ways to Overcome Picky Eating & Food Sensory Sensitivities
LARA DATO, MS, OTR/L
FOREWORD BY SUZANNE MOUTON-ODUM, PHD & RUTH GOLDFINGER GOLOMB, LCPC

mother to their own children (often sending money to families in their home countries) and being a good nanny, revealing just how crucial mothering, paid and otherwise, is to global societies and economies.

**Overcoming Parental Anxiety:** Rewire Your Brain to Worry Less and Enjoy Parenting More. By Debra Kissen and others. 2022. New Harbinger.

Anxious parents raise anxious kids, according to the three anxiety psychologists who authored this very practical book. The team offers parents concrete ways to "rewire" their "parent brains," changing their worry and guilt to self-compassion and peace. The book is filled with quizzes to help readers assess where they stand on the worry chart; readers are asked to be aware when their thoughts begin to spin, to evaluate the reality of the threat, and to come up with action steps. Good enough rather than perfection is the goal in this useful and reassuring approach to parenting.

**Raising Adventurous Eaters:** Practical Ways to Overcome Picky Eating and Food Sensory Sensitivities. By Lara Dato. 2022. New Harbinger.

Recalling how parents used to traumatize their picky-eater kids by forcing them to stay at the table until they cleaned their plates, pediatric "feeding therapist" Dato offers better alternatives. Her guide is organized by sense—touch, hearing, sight, smell and taste—since, Dato notes, that's how children explore food, and includes smart and practical strategies.

**Remedies for Sorrow:** An Extraordinary Child, a Secret Kept from Pregnant Women, and a Mother's Pursuit of the Truth. By Megan Nix. 2023. Doubleday.

Nix's daughter was exposed in the womb to CMV, which can cause deafness, blindness, delayed development, physical and neurological complications, and even premature death. Nix was shocked to learn that CMV is a common virus most often spread by toddlers that stays in people's systems forever. Her insightful account conveys crucial information and calls for far more public awareness.

**So When Are You Having Kids?** The Definitive Guide for Those Who Aren't Sure If, When, or How They Want to Become Parents. By Jordan Davidson. 2022. Sounds True.

Those searching for information on parenthood will find very little information about how to decide whether or not to become parents, or how and when to do it. Davidson fills that need with this comprehensive, inclusive guide (women, men, nonbinary people, same-sex couples, and single parents will all see themselves and their experiences reflected here) addressing just about every concern a prospective parent might have. The author pairs exhaustive research and expert opinions with dozens of personal stories from a wide variety of parents and discusses many issues.

**The Trayvon Generation.** By Elizabeth Alexander. 2022. Grand Central.

Poet and memoirist Alexander considers the racially charged social conflicts and pressures her sons and other young Black Americans are facing in the wake of the murders of Trayvon Martin, George Floyd, and too many others in beautifully illuminating essays accompanied by works by Black poets and artists.

**When Worry Works:** How to Harness Your Parenting Stress and Guide Your Teen to Success. By Dana Dorfman. 2023. Rowman & Littlefield.

Parenting teens is stressful, admits psychotherapist Dorfman, mother of two teens. With COVID-19, academic competition, school shootings, and social media posts, teens and their parents face a lot of pressure and parents get anxious. But fear and worry aren't all bad, according to Dorfman. These emotions spark creativity, get us moving, and save us from disasters. Dorfman explains how.

Reserve These Reads

# Adult

Get your hands on these hotly anticipated books, all out this month.

## Fiction

**Beware the Woman.** By Megan Abbott. Putnam.

A newly married woman and her husband travel to visit his father on Michigan's Upper Peninsula, where they are greeted with hospitality until a health scare has her questioning if it's cabin fever or something worse.

**Chain-Gang All-Stars.** By Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah. Pantheon.

Adjei-Brenyah's buzzy debut novel, following his short story collection, *Friday Black* (2018), is a kaleidoscopic look at a future in which prisoners compete in gladiator-like competitions for their freedom.

**The Chateau.** By Jaclyn Goldis. Atria/Emily Bestler.

A girls' trip in picture-perfect Provence turns deadly in this debut thriller.

**I Am Homeless If This Is Not My Home.** By Lorrie Moore. Knopf.

Moore's first novel in over a decade spans centuries and introduces ghosts, a journal, and dying loved ones to ponder mysteries of life and grief.

**Identity.** By Nora Roberts. St. Martin's.

When a dinner-party guest turns out to be a con artist and murderer, a woman escapes to her mother's home in Vermont, where she meets a down-to-earth man, but the killer is still out there.

**The Making of Another Major Motion Picture Masterpiece.** By Tom Hanks. Knopf.

Hanks—yes, that one—proved to be an excellent short-story writer with the best-selling *Uncommon Type* (2017). His first novel is the dovetailing story of a 1970s comic book, its creator, and the movie he inspires decades later.

**The Old Lion:** A Novel of Theodore Roosevelt. By Jeff Shaara. St. Martin's.

The latest from historical-fiction master Shaara is structured like a biography of Teddy Roosevelt but allows readers into the mind of the man.

**Paper Names.** By Susie Luo. Hanover Square.

First-time-novelist Luo brings together a Chinese American family and a white lawyer, united by a shocking crime in Manhattan.

**Rogue Justice.** By Stacey Abrams. Doubleday.

Lawmaker, truth-teller, and best-selling-author Abrams sends series heroine Supreme Court–clerk Avery Keene to investigate a ring of corrupt federal judges, catalyzing much suspense and discovery.

**Summer on Sag Harbor.** By Sunny Hostin. Morrow.

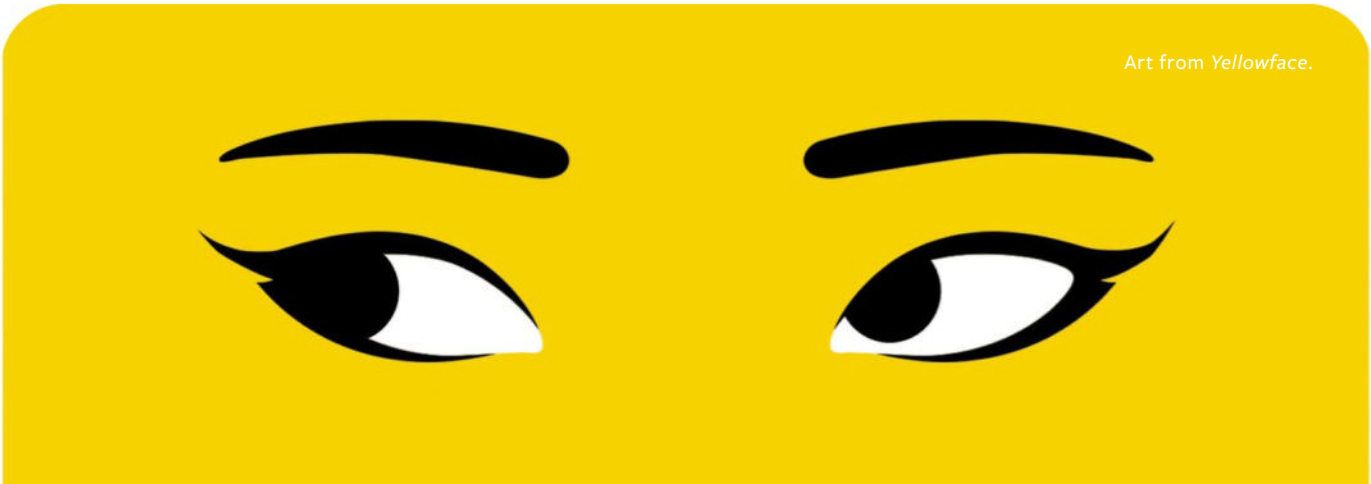
In the follow-up to the best-selling *Summer on the Bluffs* (2021), a hidden enclave of Black-owned vacation homes in the Hamptons is discovered by developers as a woman summers in Sag Harbor to find closure after the death of her police-officer father when she was a child.

**Titanium Noir.** By Nick Harkaway. Knopf.

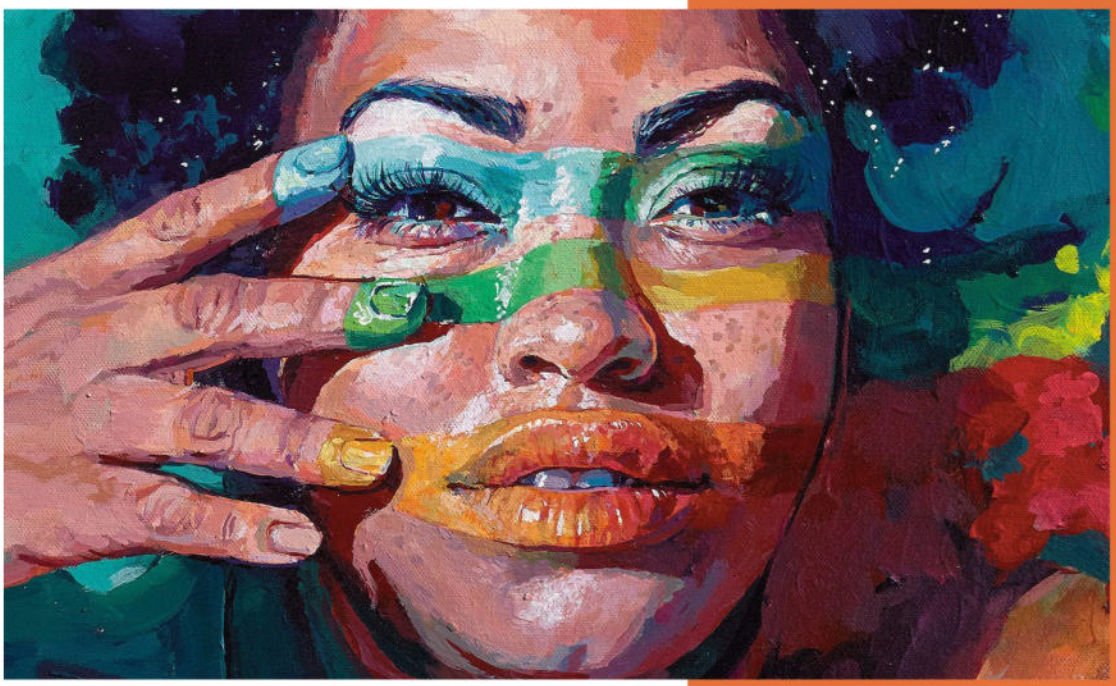
A tech-infused, dystopian crime story follows a detective on the trail of the killer of a Titan, a genetically enhanced, elite human, whose murder sends shockwaves through the near-future world.

**Yellowface.** By R. F. Kuang. Morrow.

SF/F author Kuang (*Babel*, 2022) takes on cultural appropriation and the publishing industry in this literary thriller about a white woman who steals her dead Asian American colleague's manuscript and publishes it under a pseudonym to great success.



Art from *Yellowface*.



Art from *A Renaissance of Our Own* and *Quietly Hostile*.

## Nonfiction

**The Daddy Diaries:** The Year I Grew Up. By Andy Cohen. Holt.

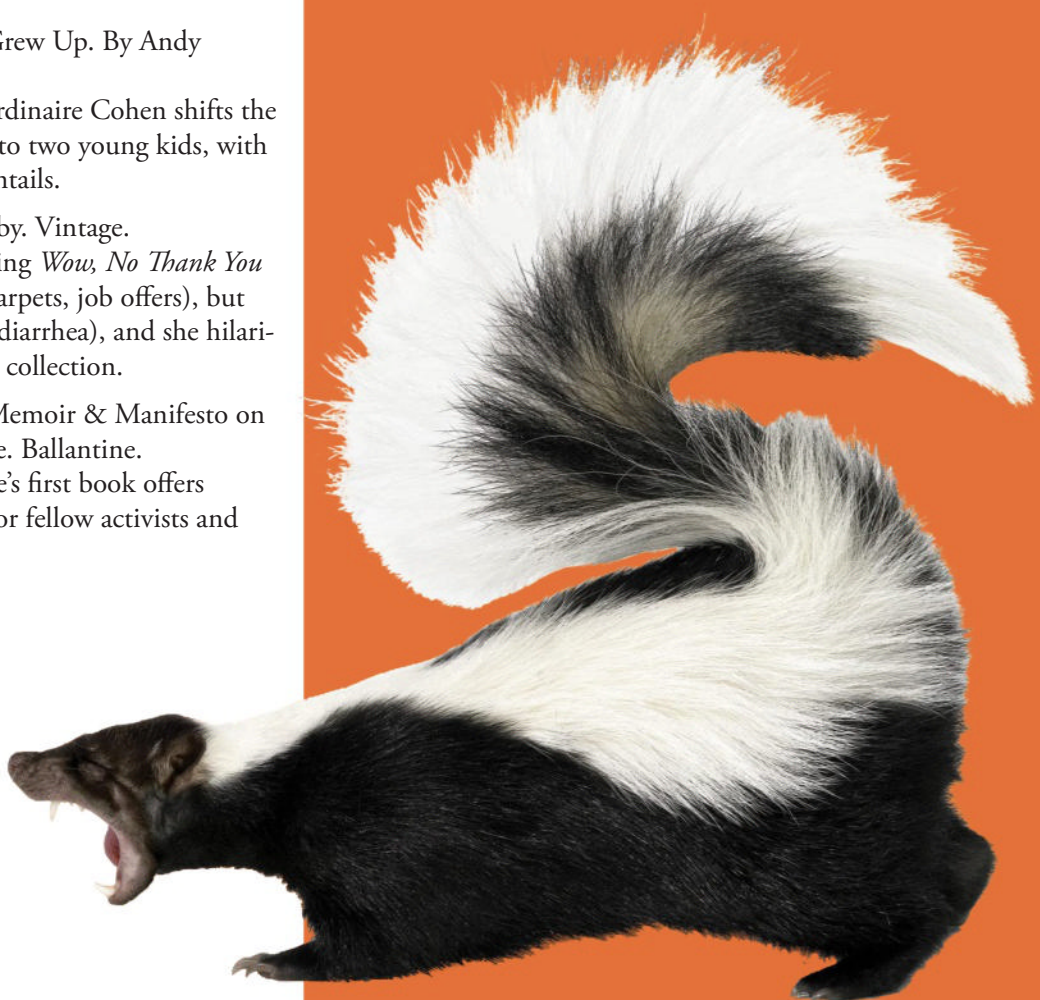
Bravo producer and host extraordinaire Cohen shifts the focus to his life as a single parent to two young kids, with all the hard work and hilarity it entails.

**Quietly Hostile.** By Samantha Irby. Vintage.

In the follow-up to the best-selling *Wow, No Thank You* (2020), Irby's star has risen (red carpets, job offers), but she's still falling apart (bad teeth, diarrhea), and she hilariously chronicles it all in this essay collection.

**A Renaissance of Our Own:** A Memoir & Manifesto on Reimagining. By Rachel E. Cargle. Ballantine.

Activist and entrepreneur Cargle's first book offers both her story and a framework for fellow activists and champions for the marginalized.

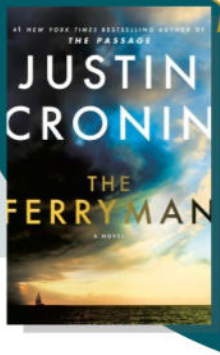


# May 2023

## The Top Ten Adult Fiction and Nonfiction Chosen Monthly by America's Library Staff

LIBRARY READS

**Find out more at www.LibraryReads.org**

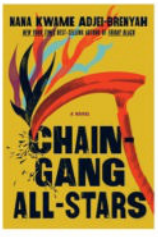



**TOP PICK**

*The Ferryman: A Novel*
Justin Cronin
(Ballantine Books)

In a world where people don't die but are ferried away to be regenerated into a 16-year-old with no memories, Proctor is responsible for making sure the "retirees" go without a fuss. But he is quickly drawn into a mystery at the heart of their society. The multi-layered quality moves this from a poignant story into thriller, into world-exploring science fiction.

—John Sloan, Chicago Public Library
NoveList read-alike: *Saha* /Nam-Ju Cho




*Chain-Gang All-Stars: A Novel*
Nana Kwame Adjei-Brenyah
(Pantheon)

In a near-future America, prisoners can opt into a gruesome program of death matches against other prisoners. Their lives are broadcast to a bloodthirsty public, and they can win their freedom if they kill enough opponents. The novel employs an effective series of rotating narrators to tell all sides of this story, forcing us to look at how we dehumanize prisoners.

— Laura Bovee, Chicopee Public Library
NoveList read-alike: *Bitch Planet*/Kelly Sue DeConnick

*The Guest: A Novel*
Emma Cline
(Random House)

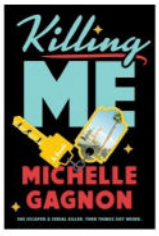
Alex is coasting through life on the grace and credit card of her older boyfriend for the summer. She can't return to the city now that her roommates want nothing to do with her, and her friends have all disappeared. There is nothing she won't do, and no one she won't manipulate, to get what she needs: a bit more time. Perfect for fans of *The Talented Mr. Ripley.*

— Kimberly McGee, Lake Travis Community Library
NoveList read-alike: *Luster*/Raven Leilani

*The Half Moon: A Novel*
Mary Beth Keane
(Scribner)

What happens when your current life doesn't match your expectations? That's what's happening with Malcom and Jess. The married couple thought things would be easier, but life keeps throwing curveballs at them. Over the course of a blizzard, they are forced to reckon with their decisions and determine if they can move forward on a different path.

—Melissa Tunstall, Charleston County Public Library
NoveList read-alike: *Early Morning Riser*/Katherine Heiny




*Killing Me*
Michelle Gagnon
(G.P. Putnam's Sons)

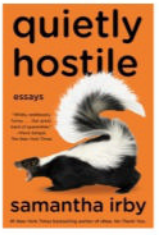
Amber has very strong opinions about people who fall prey to serial killers and is sure that being savvy and street smart will keep her safe. Until she is taken by a serial killer, and her life becomes a hot mess. This quirky, snarky book reads like Janet Evanovich teamed up with Stephen King.

— Linda Quinn, Fairfield Public Library
NoveList read-alike: *Everyone in My Family Has Killed Someone*/Benjamin Stevenson

*Practice Makes Perfect: A Novel*
Sarah Adams
(Dell)

A sweet Kentucky florist looking for love asks her sister-in-law's bodyguard to help her sass up after a date accuses her of being too boring. With wonderful characters, this cute romance is a great second installment in the When in Rome series.

— Sonya Skibicki, Bartlett Public Library District
NoveList read-alike: *The American Roommate Experiment*/Elena Armas




*Quietly Hostile: Essays*
Samantha Irby
(Vintage)

If you haven't already read Irby: 1) Who are you and how do you live? 2) This is a perfect time to start. Reading her relatable essays feels like hanging out with an older sister who doesn't sugarcoat the awkward parts of life and helps you recognize you're not the only one faking your way through adulthood.

— Rebecca Hayes, Highland Park Public Library
NoveList read-alike: *She's Nice Though*/Mia Mercado

*The Secret Book of Flora Lea*
Patti Callahan Henry
(Atria)

A poetic tribute to the power of story. Exploring the lifelong effects of the horrors of war, the richly developed characters endure loss that haunts them into adulthood. When a mysterious book appears, it sets in motion a search for answers, making sense of the past, and healing of broken hearts.

— Ron Block, Cuyahoga County Public Library
NoveList read-alike: *The Distant Hours/Kate Morton*

*The Wishing Game: A Novel*
Meg Shaffer
(Ballantine Books)

In this magical tale, a beloved children's author announces a tantalizing game: four fans can compete to win the only copy of his new book. All the contestants are intriguing, but readers will root for Lucy, a teacher's aide desperate to find the money needed to adopt an orphaned boy.

— Beth Mills, New Rochelle Public Library
NoveList read-alike: *Mr. Penumbra's 24-Hour Bookstore*/ Robin Sloan

*Witch King*
Martha Wells
(Tordotcom)

Kai, the eponymous (and erroneously named) Witch King, traverses two timelines as he helps overthrow an empire and then has to deal with the descendants of heroes who live long enough to become villains. A very fun, tightly plotted epic fantasy with spectacular worldbuilding and pacing.

— Veronica Koven-Matasy, Boston Public Library
NoveList read-alike: *The Goblin Emperor*/Katherine Addison

**Bonus pick:**

*Hula: A Novel*
Jasmin 'Iolani Hakes
(HarperVia)

*See our social media for annotation!*

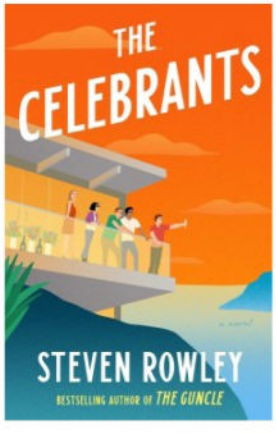
Read-alikes provided by NoveList and the LibraryReads Community. | Made in LibraryAware - www.libraryaware.com

LIBRARY READS

HALL OF FAME AUTHORS

# MAY 2023

The LibraryReads Hall of Fame designation honors authors who have had multiple titles appear on the monthly LibraryReads list since 2013. When their third title places on the list via library staff votes, the author moves into the Hall of Fame.

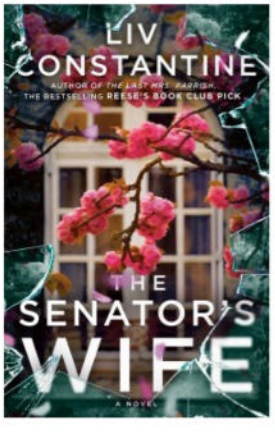



*The Celebrants*
by Steven Rowley
(G.P. Putnam's Sons)

This story of four lifelong friends going through the challenges of middle age will make the reader feel like they know each character intimately by the end. And even when tragic events occur, there is still humor and a lot of heart. Highly recommended for readers looking for a light read with emotional depth.

—Elizabeth I., DeKalb County Public Library System

NoveList read-alike:
*This Time Tomorrow*/Emma Straub

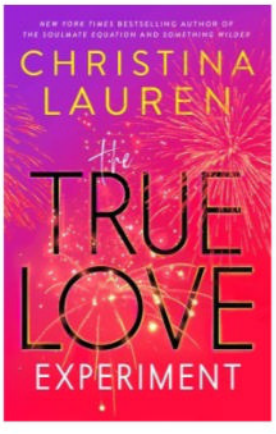



*The Senator's Wife: A Novel*
by Liv Constantine
(Bantam Books)

After her husband was murdered, Sloane never expected to find happiness, but she did...with Whit, who was married to her husband's killer. Whit considerately hires an aide for Sloane, who has a chronic illness, to help her recover from major surgery. But as she suffers debilitating flare-ups and Whit exhibits suspicious behavior, Sloane wonders whether she will ever get her life back. This thriller will keep readers up well after bedtime.

—Chris Markley, Kingsport Public Library

NoveList read-alike:
*The Personal Assistant*/Kimberly Belle


NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF THE SOULMATE EQUATION AND SOMETHING WILDER
CHRISTINA LAUREN
The TRUE LOVE EXPERIMENT

*The True Love Experiment*
by Christina Lauren
(Gallery Books)

Romance author Felicity (Fizzy) Chen is asked by documentary filmmaker Connor Prince to find her "Golden Match" on a reality dating show. Readers will love seeing the dynamic between Fizzy and Connor grow through both their perspectives. Fun and light, this is perfect for *Bachelor*/*Bachelorette* fans.

—Rachel Salazar, Pueblo City County Library District

NoveList read-alike:
*The Charm Offensive*/Allison Cochrun

*Yellowface: A Novel*
by R. F. Kuang
(William Morrow)

Kuang hits it out of the park with eviscerating observations on the publishing world. She asks astute and provoking questions: Who gets to succeed in publishing? Why can we only have a few writers of color in a publisher's docket at a time? Who gets to call out these transactions and does cancel culture hold the transgressors responsible? As a biracial reader, this hit home, particularly the way it ends with the question: What is the point of writing the great American novel if you've manipulated, exploited, and fetishized people of color to get there? An excellent example of women's work that expresses anger, which is still rarely shown in contemporary fiction.

—Molly Nota, Ada Community Library-Connect Branch

NoveList read-alike:
*The Other Black Girl*/Zakiya Dalila Harris

Find out more at www.LibraryReads.org

Made inLibraryAware - www.libraryaware.com

Must Listen

# High-Action History on Audio

**by Heather Booth**

History provides rich landscapes for nonfiction narrations that bring the past to life for all ages.

## Young

**Brave Girl:** Clara and the Shirtwaist Makers' Strike of 1909. By Michelle Markel. Read by Lesa Lockford. 2014. 9min. Dreamscape. K–Gr. 3.

The inspiring story of a teenage immigrant who helped advocate for better pay and shorter hours for factory workers a century ago.

**Night Flight:** Amelia Earhart Crosses the Atlantic. By Robert Burleigh. Read by Laura Hamilton. 2012. 22min. Live Oak. Gr. 1–4.

Sound effects and a narration that ranges from tense to jubilant bring the famed aviator's travels to vivid life for young readers.

**Soldier for Equality:** José de la Luz Sáenz and the Great War. By Duncan Tonatiuh. Read by David DeSantos. 2019. 1hr. Dreamscape. Gr. 2–5.

Wartime sound effects and alternating cheerful and dramatic music help convey the story of Tejano Luz's journey from battlefield to Civil Rights activist.

## Middle Grade

**Disaster Strikes!** The Most Dangerous Space Missions of All Time. By Jeffrey Kluger. Read by L. J. Ganser. 2019. 5hr. Recorded Books. Gr. 4–7.

The 12 real-life stories are packed with dramatic near-misses, exciting rescues, and devastating tragedies.

**March Forward, Girl:** From Young Warrior to Little Rock Nine. By Melba Pattillo Beals. Read by Janina Edwards. 2018. 4.5hr. Dreamscape. Gr. 5–8.

Edwards' conversational tone makes listeners feel they are hearing the author tell her own story.

**The Port Chicago 50:** Disaster, Mutiny, and the Fight for Civil Rights. By Steve Sheinkin. Read by Dominic Hoffman. 2014. 4hr. Listening Library. Gr. 6–9.

A deep voice and expert pacing convey the fear and confusion of African American sailors tried for mutiny after a naval-station disaster.

**Samurai Rising.** By Pamela S. Turner. Read by Brian Nishii. 2016. 5hr. Recorded Books. Gr. 5–8.

In the twelfth century, Minamoto Yoshitsune fought against all odds to become the most powerful samurai warrior in Japanese history.

## Teen

**The Family Romanov:** Murder, Rebellion, and the Fall of Imperial Russia. By Candace Fleming. Read by Kimberly Farr. 2014. 9.5hr. Listening Library. Gr. 9–12.

Farr's crisp narration swings from outrage to sympathy at this extraordinary tale of excess and tragedy.

**Fallout.** By Steve Sheinkin. Read by Roy Samuelson. 2021. 8.5hr. Listening Library. Gr. 7–10.

All the staples of great spy fiction are here, with the added intrigue of it all being true.

**More Deadly Than War:** The Hidden History of the Spanish Flu and the First World War. By Kenneth C. Davis. Read by Adenrele Ojo and MacLeod Andrews. 2018. 5hr. Listening Library. Gr. 7–10.

Andrews' approachable, conversational narration is a curious match for this bizarre and horrifying account of last century's pandemic.

## Adult

**Empire of Ice and Stone:** The Disastrous and Heroic Voyage of the Karluk. By Buddy Levy. Read by Will Damron. 2022. 14.5hr. Macmillan Audio.

Though it has all the heroism and peril of an adventure novel, the toll of this 1913 Arctic exploration was real, human, and significant, all of which Damron's narration ably conveys.

**Let Me Be Frank:** A Book about Women Who Dressed like Men to Do Shit They Weren't Supposed to Do. By Tracy Dawson. Read by Kendra Hoffman. 2022. 5.5hr. HarperAudio.

With a background in improv, Hoffman expresses high enthusiasm that is a great mode for exploring mind-blowing bits of historical gender inequity.

## Now Hear This

# Soneela Nankani

**by Terry Hong**

She can sound like a frightened little girl on the run or a gruff old man who's seen it all. She can talk financial crises, offer self-help guidance, embody fantasy worlds, and channel her inner Gisele Bündchen. She narrates in multiple tongues, donning accents and languages with ease as she guides headphoned listeners across borders and cultures. Bolstered by classical training (she's Columbia MFA-ed and works in film, TV, and theater), Soneela Nankani's audio credits have topped 100 performances—with more forthcoming.

**Girls Burn Brighter.** By Shobha Rao. 2018. 11.5hr. Macmillan.

Rao's debut novel, about the disparate lives of two Indian girls, finds the ideal narrator in Nankani. She's consistently effective in individuating her dual protagonists while displaying impressively subtle adaptations for the diverse cast, from a powerless father to an angry mother-in-law, from a helpful airport stranger to a brutally abusive pimp.

**Lucky Boy.** By Shanti Sekaran. 2017. 16.5hr. Books on Tape.

Roxana Ortega and Nankani volley narration as two mothers of the same *Lucky Boy*, desperate to mother well, mother consistently, or mother at all. Ortega and Nankani perform with careful sensitivity, presenting appropriate multilingual accents that aurally confront the shifting definitions of what it means to be American today.

**The Person You Mean to Be:** How Good People Fight Bias. By Dolly Chugh and Laszlo Bock. Read by Soneela Nankani. 2018. 9hr. Recorded Books.

Performing instructive nonfiction that draws in listeners takes both skill and deep understanding of the content being delivered. Nankani's tone remains cheerful and friendly, suggesting that the book energizes, rather than demands awareness of self and others. Chugh's many anecdotes that everyone can become a better person and that the *becoming*, rather than resting on perfection, is the goal.

**Sonora.** By Hannah Lillith Assadi. 2017. 6hr. Recorded Books.

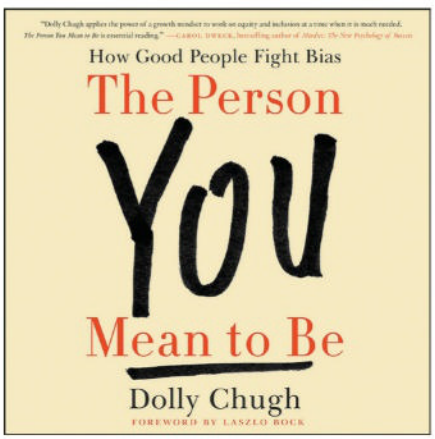
Assadi's atmospheric debut is further enhanced by Nankani's skillful narration. She subtly distinguishes between the present—as the adult Ahlam, who returns home to care for her hospitalized father—and the past—as younger Ahlam reveals her fraught relationship with the enigmatic Laura—by adroitly moderating her voice from eerie calm to frenetic desperation.

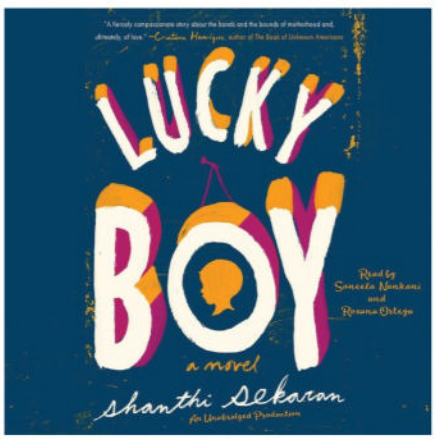
**The Widows of Malabar Hill.** By Sujata Massey. 2018. 14.5hr. Recorded Books.

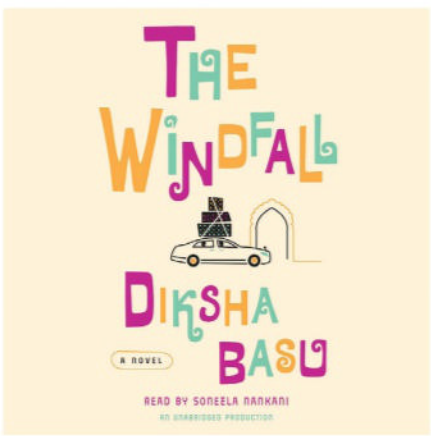
Nankani turns in an auspicious narration of Massey's promising new series set in early twentieth-century colonial India and starring feisty Perveen Mistry, India's first female solicitor. She seamlessly adjusts tone and tenor to voice the vast cast across age, gender, social station, international backgrounds, and more.

**The Windfall.** By Diksha Basu. 2017. 10hr. Books on Tape.

Money—who has it, how it's spent, what it buys, what it can't, what its true value is—drives Basu's endearing and astute debut. Welcome to Delhi, where the have-enoughs and the have-too-muches live separate lives. Ever-versatile Nankani enhances the global experience by narrating seamlessly in both American English and the more lyrical Indian English for authentic conversations.



# Celebrating AAPI Month

PBS BOOKS

May celebrates Asian American and Pacific Islander Month.

With a long history in the United States, Asian American and Pacific Islander writers have created a literary legacy of published works and unpublished manuscripts since the nineteenth century; it is as diverse as the people their work represents.

PBS Books celebrates Asian American and Pacific Islander writers of today on an ongoing basis for adults and children, featuring authors and poets in digital conversations. Here are some recent features:

**Adult Writers**

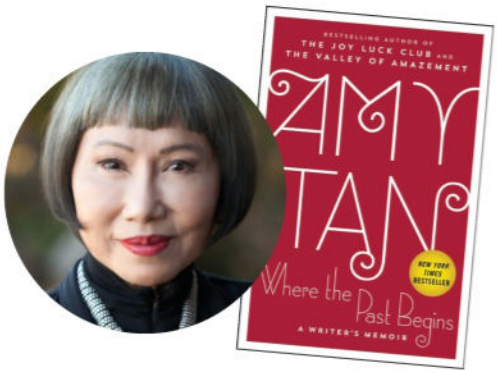
- Marilyn Chin
- Celeste Ng
- Amy Tan
- Viet Thanh Nguyen
- Reshma Saujani

**Young Adult Writers**

- Sabaa Tahir
- Gene Luen Yang
- Paula Yoo

**Children Writers**

- Mitali Banerjee Ruths
- Minh Lê
- Grace Lin
- Dan Santat
- Kelly Yang



FROM A WHISPER TO A RALLYING CRY
PAULA YOO
THE KILLING OF VINCENT CHIN and the TRIAL that GALVANIZED the ASIAN AMERICAN MOVEMENT

The struggles of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in America are also captured in the recent film broadcast on PBS, *Asian Americans*, *Who Killed Vincent Chin*, produced in collaboration with the Center for Asian American Media. Visit pbsbooks.org/asianamerican.

# ICONIC AMERICA

(Airdates: April 26–May 17 & July 12–August 2)

PBS

Highlighted Program

## Think about the important icons in your community and in your life as an American.

**ICONIC AMERICA: OUR SYMBOLS AND STORIES** explores American history through a close examination of iconic national symbols: indelible artifacts, places, and archetypes. Hosted by co-founder of The Carlyle Group and patriotic philanthropist, David M. Rubenstein engages in conversation with historical thinkers, community members, and subject matter experts. Together, they dive deeply into each symbol's history and how its meaning has changed over time, using symbols like the **American Cowboy**, the **Statue of Liberty**, and the **Hollywood Sign** as a gateway to understanding America's past and present.

The series will challenge viewers to think about the enduring symbols that speak to what a society values and how people see themselves—and how they help us to contextualize a nation's shared past in the present moment.

Libraries across the country will partner with PBS Books and their local stations to offer programming in conjunction with **ICONIC AMERICA.** Check your local listing.

Visit pbsbooks.org/iconicamerica.

***PBS Books*** *is a multimedia initiative connecting audiences to authors, books, and educational content, enabling them to explore topics and issues from diverse perspectives leading to increased knowledge and enriched lives. Visit pbsbooks.org or our social media channels (Facebook and YouTube).*

Art from *Seen and Unseen*.

The Essentials

# Hidden Histories

**by Maggie Reagan**

In recent years, there has been a notable push to expand beyond the previously accepted historical record. Who wrote our histories? Whose voices have been left out or edited beyond recognition? What long-held facts may have more to them? How much do we really not know about our pasts?

These books—for middle readers, older readers, and those in transition between the two—look at moments from our collective history that have been buried, suppressed, or are in need of correction. While it is by no means a comprehensive list, the titles here, categorized loosely by subject, represent the essentials to have on hand as we broaden our minds and resources.

## Civil Rights & Racial Justice

**Black Birds in the Sky.** By Brandy Colbert. 2021. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray. Gr. 8–12.

The 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre, while widely overlooked in history books, has more recently become a part of historical discussions. Here, Colbert contextualizes the massacre against America's legacy of racism and demands accountability from her readers.

**Picking Up the Pieces:** Residential School Memories and the Making of the Witness Blanket. By Carey Newman and Kirstie Hudson. 2019. Orca. Adult.

Artist Newman (Kwakwaka'wakw/Coast Salish/English/Irish/Scottish) details the making of his Witness Blanket—a wood-framed screen containing belongings from each residential school in Canada, highlighting a shameful and often unacknowledged aspect of North American history. Survivor stories from Indigenous contributors connected to the objects open the narrative.

**Revolution in Our Time:** The Black Panther Party's Promise to the People. By Kekla Magoon. 2021. Candlewick. Gr. 7–12.

This thorough history of the Black Panther Party expands upon common conceptions—and misconceptions—about the civil rights group, creating a fully rounded portrait that highlights problems within the party alongside its community-betterment programs and its struggles with its media image.

**Seen and Unseen:** What Dorothea Lange, Toyo Miyatake, and Ansel Adams's Photographs Reveal about the Japanese American Incarceration. By Elizabeth Partridge. Illus. by Lauren Tamaki. 2022. Chronicle. Gr. 6–9.

This artful account uses the work and stories of three photographers—two white and free, one Japanese and imprisoned—to illuminate the life and injustices of Japanese Americans detained during WWII in a rarely seen way.

## Sex & Sexuality

**Jane against the World:** Roe v. Wade and the Fight for Reproductive Rights. By Karen Blumenthal. 2020. Roaring Brook. Gr. 8–12.

Sibert-nominated Blumenthal plunges into the murky waters surrounding the complex history of the landmark *Roe v. Wade* case and of the century in American history that led to the ruling, offering readers a full portrait of a thorny and often oversimplified issue.

**No Way, They Were Gay?** Hidden Lives and Secret Loves. By Lee Wind. 2021. Lerner/Zest. Gr. 7–12.

Lee offers 11 profiles of men, women, and nonbinary people, many of them well-known historical figures, whom he asserts were gay, but homophobic history has erased much of the evidence. Through primary and secondary sources and anthropological field notes, he sets out to correct the record.

**Queer Ducks (and Other Animals):** The Natural World of Animal Sexuality. By Eliot Schrefer. Illus. by Jules Zuckerberg. 2022. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen. Gr. 9–12.

In addition to documenting same-sex activity in the animal kingdom, Schrefer delves into the science that has been mislabelled or ignored due to prevailing social norms and offers candid personal anecdotes about growing up gay.

## Social Studies & Government

**Buried Lives:** The Enslaved People of George Washington's Mount Vernon. By Carla Killough McClafferty. 2018. Holiday. Gr. 6–10.

Handsome illustrations and meticulous back matter give life to six people whom history has largely ignored: the enslaved individuals who worked at Mount Vernon under George Washington. Our first president, the text makes clear, owned people all his life.

**In the Shadow of Liberty:** The Hidden History of Slavery, Four Presidents, and Five Black Lives. By Kenneth C. Davis. 2016. Holt. Gr. 7–10.

This well-researched book features five enslaved people and the four U.S. presidents who owned them. The information about the five lesser-known African Americans is given a sense of context, and the book offers a particularly realistic view of these presidents.

**The Mayflower.** By Kate Messner. Illus. by Dylan Meconis. 2020. Random. Gr. 4–7.

Messner's now-flourishing History Smashers series challenges misconceptions about history with thorough research and sources from those often left out of the historical record. This first installment in the series debunks myths about the *Mayflower*, Pilgrims, and the first Thanksgiving with sources from the Wampanoag people.

## STEM

**Hidden Human Computers:** The Black Women of NASA. By Sue Bradford Edwards and Duchess Harris. 2017. ABDO/Essential Library. Gr. 7–12.

While the movie *Hidden Figures* (based on the adult book) may have brought awareness to the Black women working at NASA during the space race, they weren't always recognized. This volume in the Hidden Heroes series describes the women's roles as well as the double discrimination they encountered as African American women.

**In the Shadow of the Moon:** America, Russia, and the Hidden History of the Space Race. By Amy Cherrix. 2021. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray. Gr. 8–11.

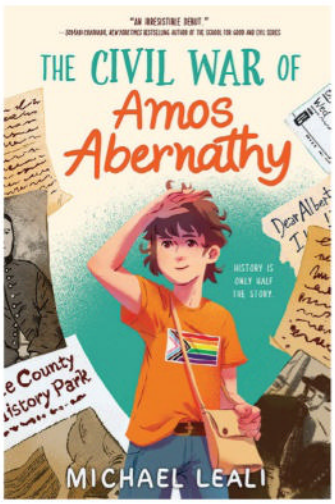
In their race to put a man on the moon, America and Russia pitted two men against each other in a battle that has been classified and buried: Wernher von Braun, recruited by the U.S. despite being a decorated major in Hitler's SS, and Sergei Korolev, even though he was imprisoned in a Gulag.

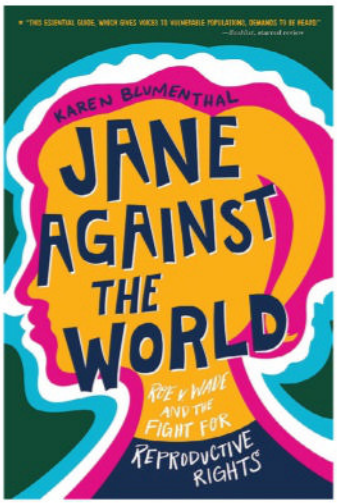
**The Radium Girls.** By Kate Moore. 2020. Sourcebooks/eXplore. Gr. 4–8.

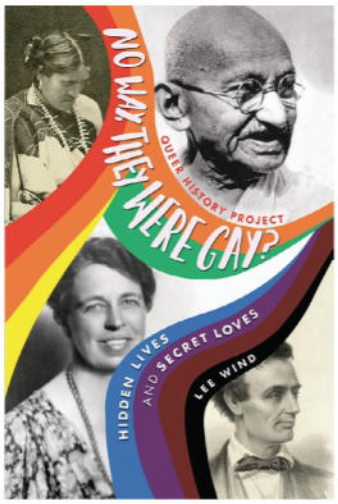
This young-readers' edition of the popular adult book spotlights the young women who worked painting watch faces with luminous radium paint, only to ultimately contract radium poisoning. A narrative of workplace safety and accountability emerges from the wreckage of their unsung lives.

**Super Women:** Six Scientists Who Changed the World. By Laurie Lawlor. 2017. Holiday. Gr. 5–8.

Through breathtaking narration, this collective biography introduces six women who were trailblazers during the 1930s through 1960s, when women were not acknowledged as career-oriented and not permitted to work alongside male coworkers. Despite discrimination and sexism, these women courageously pursued their scientific passions.



Top 10

# History Books for Youth

The following works cover important and fascinating aspects of history in exemplary ways, whether utilizing unique perspectives or impeccable documentation.

**Bandoola:** The Great Elephant Rescue. By William Grill. Illus. by the author. 2022. Flying Eye. Gr. 3–6.

Kate Greenaway–recipient Grill brings readers a beautifully illustrated story of two men and an elephant brought together by the teakwood industry in nineteenth-century Myanmar.

**Close-Up on War:** The Story of Pioneering Photojournalist Catherine Leroy in Vietnam. By Mary Cronk Farrell. 2022. Abrams/Amulet. Gr. 6–9.

Farrell blends Leroy's experiences in wartime Vietnam with historic details and fascinating insights into the world of freelance news photography. Quotes, letters, and photos by Leroy appear throughout.

**Free at Last:** A Juneteenth Poem. By Sojourner Kincaid Rolle. Illus. by Alex Bostic. 2022. Union Square Kids. Gr. 1–4.

Soulfully illustrated in a momentous style, this picture book celebrates Rolle's 2004 poem. Lyrical verses flow with a steady cadence, relating the events in Galveston when enslaved people finally received news of their liberation.

Art from *Unlawful Orders.*

**H Is for Harlem.** By Dinah Johnson. Illus. by April Harrison. 2022. Little, Brown/Christy Ottaviano. K–Gr. 3.

In this sumptuous alphabet book, Harlem is celebrated for its past and present contributions to American culture. Iconic landmarks, organizations, and individuals populate the divinely illustrated pages.

**Hanged!** Mary Surratt and the Plot to Assassinate Abraham Lincoln. By Sarah Miller. 2022. Random House Studio. Gr. 8–12.

With dramatic primary-source material, illuminating insights, and vivid turns of phrase, Miller leads readers through the web of conspiracy surrounding Lincoln's assassination.

**The Lady and the Octopus:** How Jeanne Villepreux-Power Invented Aquariums and Revolutionized Marine Biology. By Danna Staaf. 2022. Carolrhoda. Gr. 5–8.

Staaf's engaging account of Jeanne Villepreux-Power is just as valuable for the attention it pays to an under-recognized scientist as for the light it sheds on historiography.

**Peace Is a Chain Reaction:** How World War II Japanese Balloon Bombs Brought People of Two Nations Together. By Tanya Lee Stone. 2022. Candlewick. Gr. 5–8.

This nuanced account of America and Japan's relationship during WWII extends beyond the war's end, exploring the remorse felt on both sides and the meaningful reconciliation efforts that followed.

**Trapped in Terror Bay:** Solving the Mystery of the Lost Franklin Expedition. By Sigmund Brouwer. 2022. Kids Can. Gr. 5–8.

In this detailed look at the doomed Arctic Franklin Expedition, Brouwer draws upon European and Inuit accounts, debunks flimflam, and provides context while vividly weaving his tale.

**Unlawful Orders:** A Portrait of Dr. James B. Williams, Tuskegee Airman, Surgeon, and Activist. By Barbara Binns. 2022. Scholastic. Gr. 5–7.

Binns' human-interest approach to the 1945 Freeman Field mutiny utilizes interviews and oral histories to coalesce into a searing indictment of U.S. race relations and a celebration of courage.

**We the People:** Big Ideas that Changed the World #4. By Don Brown. Art by the author. 2022. Abrams/Amulet. Gr. 4–7.

First Lady Abigail Adams serves as the knowledgeable guide through this graphic-novel survey of leadership in human society. Jaunty artwork and fascinating details help bring this fast-paced lesson on democracy's evolving nature into focus.

Book Hooks

# National Parks

by Angela Leeper

## How did the Grand Canyon form?

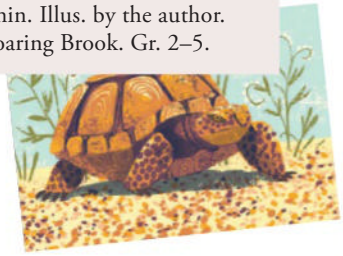
The Colorado River has been cutting into the land and washing sediment away for around 5 million years. The basement rocks, the bottommost layer of rock, are the oldest in the canyon. Some are 1.84 billion years old!

**Grand Canyon.** By Jason Chin. Illus. by the author. Roaring Brook. Gr. 2–5.

## Is Everglades National Park just a big swamp?

Marjory Stoneman Douglas wrote a book that convinced people that the Everglades is actually a slow-moving river. She also worked to save the Everglades from being drained and to help make it a national park.

**Marjory Saves the Everglades: The Story of Marjory Stoneman Douglas.** By Sandra Neil Wallace. Illus. by Rebecca Gibbon. Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman. K–Gr. 3.



## Which animal saved Yellowstone National Park?

In 1926 hunters had killed so many wolves that there were no packs left in Yellowstone. Wolves are apex predators, and their loss made the park unhealthy for other animals and plants. When wolves were brought back to Yellowstone in 1995, they improved life in the park's ecosystem.

**Bringing Back the Wolves: How a Predator Restored an Ecosystem.** By Jude Isabella. Illus. by Kim Smith. Kids Can. Gr. 3–6.

## Which national park is also the hottest place on Earth?

Death Valley National Park, which is also the driest and lowest place in North America. Desert tortoises, kit foxes, chuckwalla lizards, and kangaroo rats have all adapted to live in this desert environment.

**National Parks of the U.S.A.** By Kate Siber. Illus. by Chris Turnham. Wide Eyed. Gr. 3–5.

## How do park rangers serve national parks?

They do a wide variety of jobs. Some protect the land, work with scientists, or are part of rescue teams. Others look for threatening weather or even tell spooky campfire stories.

**If I Were a Park Ranger.** By Catherine Stier. Illus. by Patrick Corrigan. Albert Whitman. K–Gr. 2.

Read-alikes

# Community Gardens

**By Julia Smith**

The value in creating gardens in urban spaces has proven fertile ground in the realm of picture books and early readers. These gardens not only foster positive relationships with nature, but they create moments to come together with neighbors and family. *Bo and the Community Garden* (review adjacent) is a new chapter book that explores these important spaces, as do these inspiring companion reads. Dig in!

**The Bear's Garden.** By Marcie Colleen. Illus. by Alison Oliver. 2020. Macmillan/Imprint. PreS–Gr. 1.

Inspired by a Brooklyn community plot, this story tells of a young girl who tends seeds in an empty city lot with the help of her stuffed bear. Arresting cut-paper illustrations show the lot blooming into a lovely neighborhood garden.

**The Garden.** By Gwendolyn Hooks. Illus. by Shirley Ng-Benitez. 2018. Lee & Low. K–Gr. 2.

A group of children learns about urban gardening in this beginning reader. New to the area, Lily visits a local garden, where a neighbor takes her under his wing, teaching her and her friends about growing fruits and vegetables.

**Harlem Grown:** How One Big Idea Transformed a Neighborhood. By Tony Hillery. Illus. by Jessie Hartland. 2020. Simon & Schuster/Paula Wiseman. K–Gr. 3.

The real-life organization Harlem Grown was born after Hillery visited an elementary school and noticed a litter-filled lot nearby. Inspired, he enlisted the help of students to transform the land into an urban garden.

**In Our Garden.** By Pat Zietlow Miller. Illus. by Melissa Crowton. 2022. Putnam. PreS–Gr. 2.

When Millie suggests creating a garden on her school's roof, her teacher, classmates, and principal all pitch in to make Millie's dream a reality. Lively illustrations highlight the teamwork and satisfaction involved.

**Jayden's Impossible Garden.** By Mélina Mangal. Illus. by Ken Daley. 2021. Free Spirit. K–Gr. 3.

Crafting planters from coffee cans and milk cartons, young Jayden and his neighbor Mr. Curtis create a verdant oasis in their city neighborhood that is quickly abuzz with butterflies and hummingbirds.

**Mary Had a Little Plan.** By Tammi Sauer. Illus. by Vanessa Brantley-Newton. 2022. Union Square Kids. PreS–Gr. 2.

Mary has a plan to convert an abandoned lot into a garden. She mobilizes the community (all nursery rhyme characters) to help, and soon there is a wonderful garden and gathering space for everyone to enjoy.

**Me, Toma and the Concrete Garden.** By Andrew Larsen. Illus. by Anne Villeneuve. 2019. Kids Can. K–Gr. 3.

Vincent's lackluster summer takes a positive turn when he befriends a boy playing in an empty lot. As the pair throws balls of dirt, they unwittingly scatter seeds con-

tained therein, serendipitously turning the lot into a lush garden.

**Miguel's Community Garden.** By JaNay Brown-Wood. Illus. by Samara Hardy. 2022. Peachtree. PreS–Gr. 1.

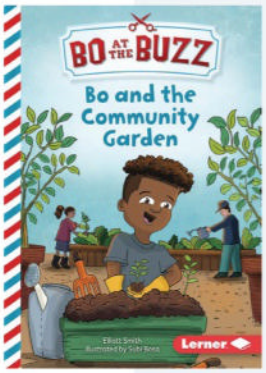
Miguel is hosting a garden party and needs sunflowers to enhance his decor. He visits his community garden to find some, and readers will join in the hunt, discovering a bounty of fruits and vegetables along the way.

**Thank You, Garden.** By Liz Garton Scanlon. Illus. by Simone Shin. 2020. Simon & Schuster/Beach Lane. PreS–Gr. 1.

Using basic rhymes and happy illustrations, this easy-to-read picture book immerses emergent readers in a community garden. Children mingle with adults as everyone tends their plots in a charming display of togetherness.

**Uncle John's City Garden.** By Bernette Ford. Illus. by Frank Morrison. 2022. Holiday. K–Gr. 3.

Uncle John and his nieces and nephew bring lush growth to a bare, Brooklyn garden plot, where they plant ingredients needed for succotash. Expressively illustrated from planting to harvest, the story culminates in a celebratory BBQ.




**Bo and the Community Garden.** By Elliott Smith. Illus. by Subi Bosa. 2023. Lerner. Gr. 1–3.

Read Woke books expands into fiction with the uplifting Bo at the Buzz early chapter-book series, starring a Black boy who lives above his grandfather's barbershop, the Buzz. In this title, an exciting announcement is made to Bo's class: their school is starting a community garden! Bo and his three pals (Silas, Zuri, and Shawn) quickly form a group and start thinking about what they'll grow in their plot. Unfortunately, they can't agree, and their first class outing to the garden ends in a fight. Back at the Buzz, Bo asks Pop-Pop what they should plant, but it's the man in Pop-Pop's chair who makes the wonderful suggestion of growing vegetables for the local homeless shelter. This is something Bo and his friends can all agree on, and they're soon up to their elbows in dirt and fun. The book's three short chapters feature cultural touchstones and lively, color illustrations. Readers not yet ready for the J.D. the Kid Barber series, by J. Dillard, will find the same Black Boy Joy here. —*Julia Smith*

## A Conversation

# Sabaa Tahir

**by Maggie Reagan**

Every so often, a book comes along that does the impossible: it lives up to the hype. The 2023 Printz Award winner was also crowned with the 2022 National Book Award for Young People's Literature and the Boston Globe–Horn Book Award. But more than that, Sabaa Tahir's *All My Rage* is a book about and for teenagers, a book that treats the trials (and their aftermath) of its characters with the utmost care, crafting a story that feels tender and wholly real.

The tight, multivoice narrative tells the story of Salahudin, a teenager in California; his mother, Misbah, dying of kidney disease; and the family motel that Sal so desperately wants to save. Elsewhere, Sal's former friend Noor lives with the uncle who's been all she has since an earthquake in Pakistan killed the rest of her family, clinging to a future that seems to diminish before her. As the two friends start to find their way back to each other, their worlds spin out of control. We spoke to Tahir about the novel—her first stand-alone—and its creation.

**Reagan:** *Salahudin's narrative is marked by events that he cannot remember; in her narrative, Noor intentionally conceals information, even from the reader. What was it like to craft these two characters side by side?*
**Tahir:** It was tricky and took many years. Early on, I decided I wanted it to be a polyphonic story—my favorite to both read and write. Perhaps that is a holdover from journalism, where ensuring multiple points of view is an essential part of being an editor. I also knew each character would be dealing with a set of problems that felt insurmountable. But things changed over the years: their personalities, locations, ages, and family backgrounds.

For a long time, Misbah was a much more central character. For years, I didn't even think of the story as a YA book. But characters are like friends—you get to know them over time. Noor and Salahudin gave up their secrets slowly. In the end, one doesn't work without the other. I had to develop them together because they are such a part of each other's story—"two halves of a whole," as Misbah says, meant to complement and challenge each other.

**Reagan:** *There are many references to other pieces of art in the text, but three in particular really give the story its spine. Can you talk about your inclusion of Elizabeth Bishop's poem "One Art," U2 and Johnny Cash's song "The Wanderer," and Ecclesiastes 1:14?*
**Tahir:** I've loved "One Art" since I read it as a teenager, and it seemed like a very apt poem for our characters, who are learning to deal with all manner of loss—from loss of family and home to loss of agency and self-respect. Through my life, I've turned to "One Art" for comfort. At each phase of my life, it has offered me something different. I wanted my characters to have that comfort as well, to introduce the poem to them and imagine that they would return to it throughout their lives, as I have.

As for "The Wanderer" and Ecclesiastes—I leave it to the reader to interpret the inclusion of those two. Authors do need some secrets :).

**Reagan:** *A recurring idea in each individual narrative is the degree to which trauma—and grief, loss, and fear—all live in the body. It's an idea that comes home in one of Misbah's last passages: "How quickly a body can betray you. It will carry you your whole life and suddenly—finished. It will carry your soul no longer. Did the soul grow too weary for the body? Did the body grow too weary for the soul?" This is such a complex concept, and you approach your characters with such care. Can you tell us more about the research that went into this element of the book?*
**Tahir:** Primarily, I interviewed a variety of medical professionals about this topic. I learned through my own therapy about how the body remembers, even when the mind doesn't. I'm reaching waaaay back here, but I believe I read a snippet of *The Body Keeps the Score,* by Bessel van der Kolk, in an e-newsletter called *The Marginalian* back in the mid-teens. That got my brain thinking about it more and I started to dig into it a couple years after that.

The topic of trauma is something that's covered in many books now, thankfully. But it's not one I'd seen much of in YA literature and if I had known as a teenager that the body can hold trauma, I would have understood myself so much better. I might not have disliked myself so much, or thought of myself as more different than, perhaps, I really was. I might have also known to talk to someone sooner about trauma.

**Reagan:** *Faith and forgiveness often occupy the same spaces in the text. Salahudin, whose name means "righteous of faith," struggles to find peace and meaning; for Noor, whose name means "light," forgiveness often feels like a dark and*

***heavy burden. Can you talk about the process behind naming your characters?***

**Tahir:** I always put a lot of time and thought into naming characters, because a name can define a person. In America, kids are supposed to have names before they leave the hospital, but in Pakistan, where my parents were born, it can take longer to find the right name. So I take that approach, and let a name come to me as I get to know the character better.

**Reagan:** ***Parents and parental figures are very present in this book. Very often they fail, and many of the teenager characters are paying for the sins of their parents. Noor asks Imam Shafiq for his thoughts on parenthood. As someone whose work reaches young people, what do you think we owe to them?***

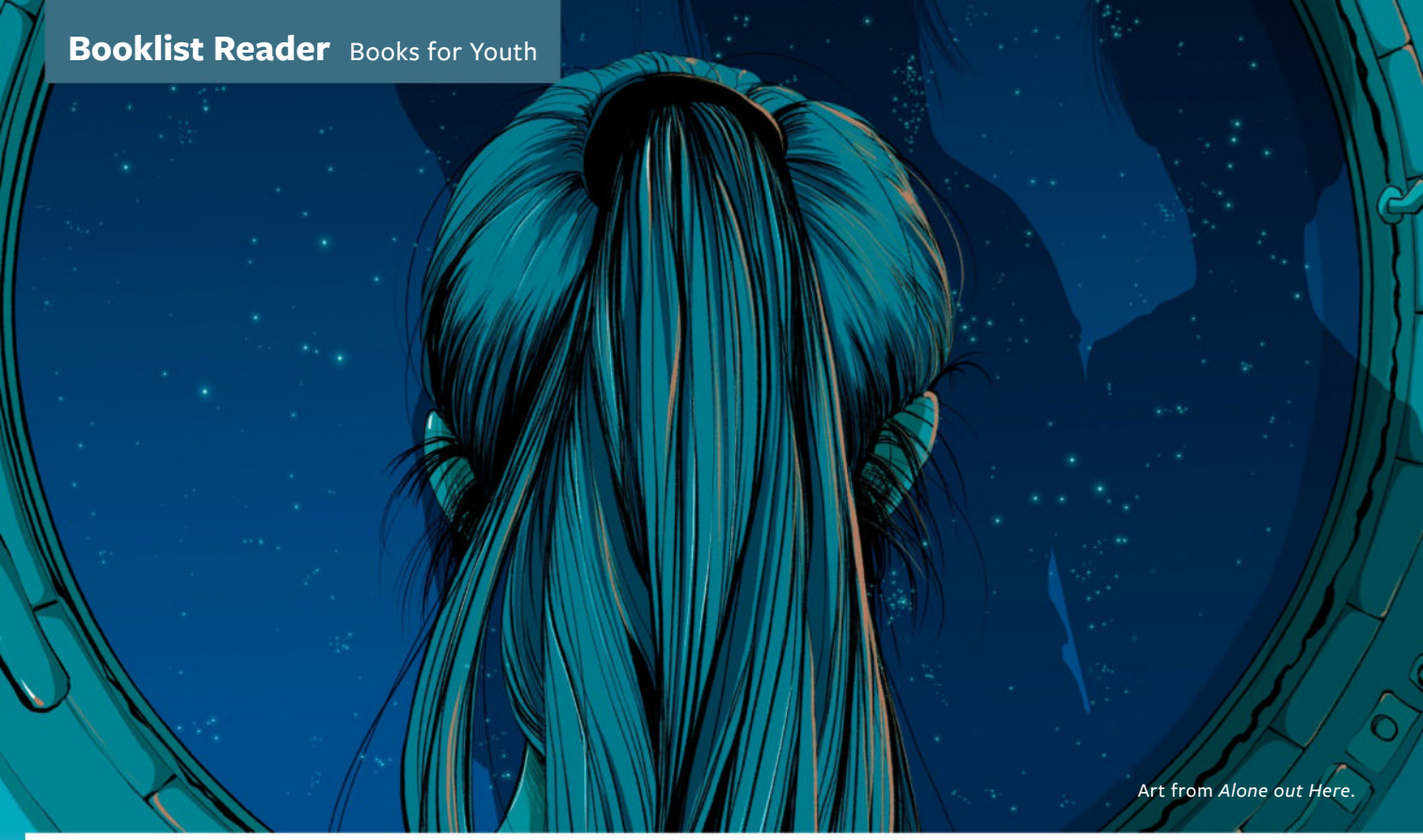
**Tahir:** I think we owe all young people so many things. We owe them our empathy. Our understanding. We owe them our patience. And perhaps most of all, we owe them the time and effort it takes to try to make the world better for them, with whatever small skill or talent or power we might have. As a writer, I try to do this by telling the truth, and hearing their truths. Even in writing fiction and fantasy, I try to tell the truth about humanity, our strengths, and our foibles as I see them, and our incredible capacity for ingenuity and hope. Those are true things to me, and our kids deserve to see them.

**Reagan:** ***This is an emotional read, and my first impressions, after finishing the book, were largely of the way it explored things like loss and deep grief. Rage and anger are very much there, but they're something that a lot of characters in the book hide or hide from—I think the first true on-page depiction of clear rage comes nearly 200 pages in. Tell us more about the title of the book, and the centering of anger in this quieter way.***

**Tahir:** Years ago, there was a kerfuffle on Twitter because of the phrase "Muslim Rage." Someone had used it in a magazine cover, and Muslim Twitter hashtagged and joked about it. "Someone just stole my parking spot at the mosque! #muslimrage"

It was hilarious, but I also thought . . . how sad that an emotion as basic and essential to humanity as anger cannot be expressed by specific groups without it being a source of fear. If a woman shouts or cries because she's angry, she's sometimes seen as being out of control. If a Muslim expresses distrust or frustration about being frisked at the airport, they're viewed as untrustworthy. If a young person says "that's not fair" or "that's wrong" the adults in their lives might say they are being childish and naive to the ways of the world. As a result, many of us hold so much anger inside and can't express it without potentially serious consequences.

That concept ends up reflecting the title. These characters are forced to hold so much of their rage inside and it's tearing them apart. The book is in a large part about their journey in dealing with that rage, acknowledging it, and figuring out what to do with it.



Art from *Alone out Here.*

Family Reads

# To Mars & Beyond

**by Sarah Hunter & Heather Booth**

Kids are question-generating machines, and it can be deflating, as a parent, to have to say, "I just don't know!" Wouldn't it be great to have a pile of facts in your back pocket on a topic that your kid or teen is reading about? In the interest of stacking the deck in parents' favor, we're offering a list of thought-provoking, thrilling, or entertaining books about deep-space travel and Mars for kids and teens that dovetails nicely with the information in best-selling Mary Roach's *Packing for Mars: The Curious Science of Life in the Void* (2010). Roach brings her gleefully inquisitive and inviting writing style to the science behind preparing for space travel and keeping humans alive in space. (And if you're really pressed for time, get the most middle-grade friendly facts in Roach's 2022 title, *Packing for Mars for Kids*.)

## Older

**Alone out Here.** By Riley Redgate. 2022. Disney/Hyperion. Gr. 9–12.

Only 53 children make it onto *Lazarus*, a prototype generation ship, when a cataclysmic volcanic eruption finally renders Earth uninhabitable. With limited resources and without the rest of the fleet, the survivors cope with fear, grief, and distrust while weighing the resilience they'll need to survive.

**The Darkness outside Us.** By Eliot Schrefer. 2021. HarperCollins/Katherine Tegen. Gr. 9–12.

Ambrose and Kodiak, teen astronauts representing countries on opposites sides of a global cold war, are paired on a mission to Titan to rescue Ambrose's sister. Though their relationship is initially chilly, they have to put their heads together when their ship begins malfunctioning.

**Mars One.** By Jonathan Maberry. 2017. Simon & Schuster. Gr. 8–11.

Tristan has been training his entire life to be one of the first Mars colonists, but when he and his family have finally launched on their mission with the rest of their crew, it becomes clear there's a saboteur in their midst. High-stakes tension combines with intensely detailed accounts of equipment and theories of long-term space travel in this thriller.

**The Mars Challenge.** By Benjamin Wilgus. Illus. by Wyeth Yates. 2020. First Second. Gr. 7–12.

Nadia is determined to be the first woman to visit Mars. First, though, she's got to learn not only the ins and outs of the Red Planet but also the past, present, and future of space travel. Lucky for Nadia, she has a resource in Ellie, a pilot on the International Space Station. In this science-based, fact-laden graphic novel for teens, refreshingly featuring two brown-skinned women scientists, readers will travel on a "conceptual journey" along with Nadia and learn just how to get to Mars and back in one piece.

**Midnight at the Electric.** By Jodi Lynn Anderson. 2017. HarperTeen. Gr. 9–12.

Stories of women from three generations interweave in this story about Adri, who's preparing to leave Earth—for good—for Mars. But in between all of her training, she travels to visit a distant relative and learns more about her family's past. Though less intensely focused on space travel itself, the emotional reality of leaving Earth behind is explored thoughtfully here.

## Middle

**The Last Cuentista.** By Donna Barba Higuera. 2021. Levine Querido. Gr. 5–8.

As Petra Peña sleeps through several lifetimes on a generation ship bound for a distant planet, caretakers of the ship have formed a destructive group set on steering the future of humanity in the direction they choose. As Petra clings to stories from her grandmother, she seeks out other settlers to find community and hope. A contemplative novel that explores the true meaning of survival.

**Last Day on Mars.** By Kevin Emerson. 2017. HarperCollins/Walden Pond. Gr. 5–8.

Liam and Phoebe are the last human kids on Mars, and they're waiting for their scientist parents to do one last experiment before they board the starliner that will take them on a 150-year journey to a habitable planet. But then: sabotage. As the kids try to catch up to the rest of the colonists, they discover that there's more to the universe than they thought. Thrilling details about real Mars discoveries ground this exciting series starter.

**The Lion of Mars.** By Jennifer L. Holm. 2021. Random. Gr. 3–6.

Bell lives a mundane life in America's underground settlement on Mars with a handful of adults and other children, where he learns the engineering skills necessary to help maintain their compound and frets over the adults' tensions with other countries' colonies nearby. Though the drama is somewhat small in this cozy sf tale, the details of the colonists lives are fascinating and absorbing.

**A Rover's Story.** By Jasmine Warga. 2022. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray. Gr. 4–6.

*Resilience*, a Mars rover training for a mission to the Red Planet, is the narrator of this profound and poignant middle-grade novel, which folds in gentle humor, determined adventure, and a mountain of fascinating facts about the complicated process of getting to Mars, even for something as sturdy as a machine.

## Picture Books

**Curiosity:** The Story of a Mars Rover. By Markus Motum. Illus. by the author. 2018. Candlewick. Gr. 1–4.

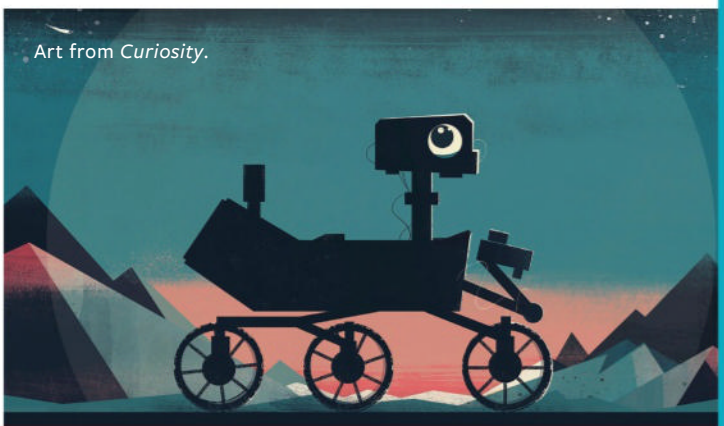
There's something personable and cute about the Mars rover *Curiosity*, and Motum's illustrations charmingly render the mobile lab with lots of cheerful character. In addition to the appeal of the subtly anthropomorphized rover, this oversize picture book packs in lots of information about space exploration, including innovations making long-distance space travel possible.

**Exploring Space:** From Galileo to the Mars Rover and Beyond. By Martin Jenkins. Illus. by Stephen Biesty. 2017. Candlewick. Gr. 2–6.

Zipping from the past through to possible futures, Jenkins introduces key moments in space exploration, advances in keeping humans alive in space, and more. Biesty's meticulously detailed illustrations are the perfect visual complement; labeled diagrams with cutaway sections, some taking up an entire page, reveal key components and inner workings of spacecraft and telescopes with scientific accuracy.

**Life on Mars.** By Jon Agee. Illus. by the author. 2017. Dial. PreS–Gr. 1.

An astronaut has traveled to Mars in a rocket ship to find Martian life, but when he arrives, all he sees is dirt and rocks and no one with whom to share his chocolate cupcakes. What a bust! Or is it? In Agee's illustrations, rendered in thick lines and sandy tones, little ones will see that there is life on Mars, in the form of a towering creature with pointy ears and a pinkish, pear-shaped body, who's probably just a little shy.



Art from *Curiosity*.

Reserve These Reads

# Children & Teens

Get your hands on these hotly anticipated books, all out this month.

## Older

**Imogen, Obviously.** By Becky Albertalli. Harper/Balzer+Bray. Gr. 9–12.

Albertalli's latest explores identity and sexuality through the story of high-school senior Imogen, ally extraordinaire, who begins to question her hetero self as she supports queer friend Lili.

**The Isles of the Gods.** By Amie Kaufman. Knopf. Gr. 7–12.

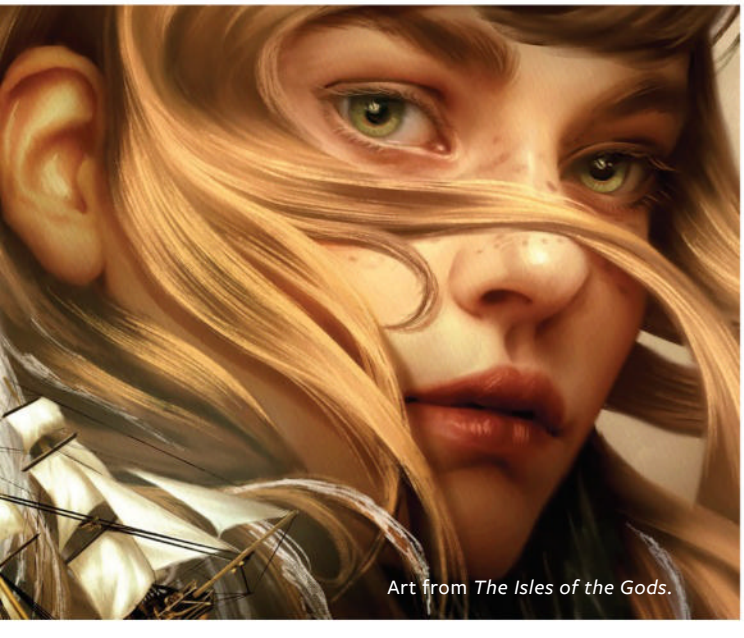
A high-seas adventure touched with magic and political intrigue is the latest from Kaufman, one half of the authorial team behind the popular Illuminae Files series.

**Liar's Beach.** By Katie Cotugno. Delacorte. Gr. 8–11.

This modernization of an Agatha Christie classic, set on Martha's Vineyard, features a teenage girl as Hercule Poirot and a house full of secrets.

**Magic Has No Borders.** Ed. by Samira Ahmed and Sona Charaipotra. HarperTeen. Gr. 8–12.

This anthology of short stories, inspired by South Asian folklore and fables, has an impressive roster of acclaimed contributing writers, including Sabaa Tahir and Sayantani DasGupta.



Art from *The Isles of the Gods.*

**Miles Morales Suspended.** By Jason Reynolds. Illus. by Zeke Pena. Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy. Gr. 7–10.

Kid Lit royalty Reynolds follows up his novel about Miles Morales, teen Spider-Man, with this story that starts when Miles is stuck in in-school suspension.

**Nigeria Jones.** By Ibi Zoboi. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray. Gr. 9–12.

In the latest from National Book Award finalist Zoboi, the eponymous teen finds herself searching for answers after her mother goes missing from their tight-knit community.

**Only This Beautiful Moment.** By Abdi Nazemian. HarperCollins/Balzer+Bray. Gr. 9–12.

From Stonewall Award–winning Nazemian comes this multigenerational story exploring three generations of one family and the many identities—Iranian, American, queer—where they find community.

**Venom & Vow.** By Anna-Marie McLemore and Elliott McLemore. Macmillan/Feiwel and Friends. Gr. 8–12.

Hidden identities, piles of secrets, and a powerful curse characterize this fantasy, the first that lauded Anna-Marie McLemore has cowritten with their spouse.

**Warrior Girl Unearthed.** By Angeline Boulley. Holt. Gr. 9–12.

Boulley returns to the world of her widely praised *Firekeeper's Daughter* with another story about the Firekeeper family on Sugar Island, this time exploring a string of missing Indigenous girls.

## Middle

**Epic Ellisons:** Cosmos Camp. By Lamar Giles. Illus. by Morgan Bissant. HarperCollins/Versify. Gr. 3–6.

The author of the Legendary Alston Boys series turns his attention to twins Wiki and Leen Ellison in this standalone spinoff of the original series.

**Fall of the School for Good and Evil.** By Soman Chainani. Illus. by RaidesArt. Harper. Gr. 5–8.

Concluding the duology that started with *The Rise of the School of Good and Evil*, this title finds the warring brothers tested one last time. A Netflix movie in the universe of the books boosts the appeal.

**The Labors of Hercules Beal.** By Gary D. Schmidt. Clarion. Gr. 3–6.

Diminutive seventh-grader Herc Beal must find a way to

complete the 12 labors of Hercules, his namesake, in real life in this latest from award-winner Schmidt.

**The One and Only Ruby.** By Katherine Applegate. Illus. by Patricia Castelao. Harper. Gr. 3–6.

An elephant is the star of this sequel to the inimitable Applegate's *The One and Only Ivan* and *The One and Only Bob*, and she tells the story of the elephant's life on the savanna in moving verse.

**When Clouds Touch Us.** By Thanhhà Lai. Harper. Gr. 4–8.

This sequel takes place two years after 2011's National Book Award–winning *Inside Out and Back Again,* as Hà's family makes another transition, this time moving to Texas.

**The Witch of Woodland.** By Laurel Snyder. HarperCollins/Walden Pond. Gr. 3–7.

Zippy's always believed in magic, and she finds refuge in it when her family and friends start behaving oddly in the latest from acclaimed author Snyder.

## Younger

**My Dad Is a Tree.** By Jon Agee. Illus. by the author. Penguin/Rocky Pond. Gr. PreS–1.

Award-winning Agee's latest winsome picture book features a little girl and her dad, who embark on a riotous day of imaginative play.

**NO Is All I Know!** By Chris Grabenstein. Illus. by Leo Espinosa. Random. PreS–Gr. 1.

Grabenstein and Espinosa, whose *No More Naps!* was a hit, return to familiar territory in this story of Oliver McSnow, who says "NO!" to absolutely everything.

**The Noise Inside Boys:** A Story about Big Feelings. By Pete Oswald. Illus. by the author. Random House Studio. PreS–Gr. 2.

Best-selling Oswald explores the big feelings kids can have and encourages emotional literacy in this picture book perfect for SEL collections.

**The Together Tree.** By Aisha Saeed. Illus. by Leuyen Pham. Simon & Schuster. PreS–Gr. 1.

A willow tree near a school becomes a place for refuge and solidarity when new kid Rumi gets bullied in this heartening story from a pair of award-winning, best-selling kid-lit creators.

**We Are Branches.** By Joyce Sidman. Illus. by Beth Krommes. Clarion. PreS–Gr. 2.

In this companion to their best-selling *Swirl by Swirl*, Sidman and Krommes explore another common pattern found in nature: branches.

Art from *Miles Morales Suspended.*

The Essentials

# Nighttime Explorations

**by Kit Ballenger**

Any time is the right time for an outdoor adventure, but shorter days and cooler weather make fall evenings especially inviting for young explorers. Whether you are looking to hit the trail, make the most of your backyard, or take more of an imaginary journey from the comfort of home, these picture books invite curiosity and wonder about the natural, nocturnal world. Bonus points if you read these by flashlight!

**The Blue Hour.** By Isabelle Simler. Illus. by the author. 2017. Eerdmans. PreS–Gr. 1.

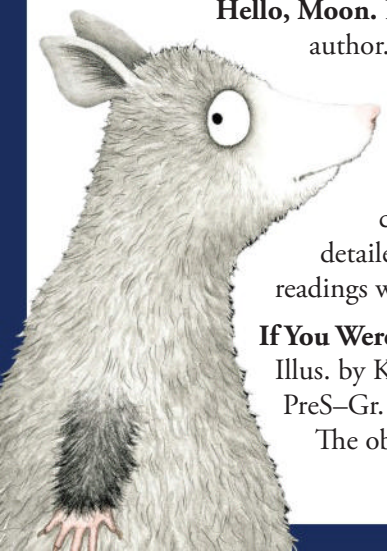
Sumptuous renderings of plants and animals from an array of habitats highlight the fleeting hues of twilight in this oversized, soothing nonfiction selection.

**Flashlight.** By Lizi Boyd. Illus. by the author. 2014. Chronicle. PreS–Gr. 1.

With a flashlight, yellow wellies, and a plucky sense of curiosity, a child explores the wonders of the darkened world beyond their tent in a wordless adventure with intricate illustrations and a striking use of color.

**Flashlight Night.** By Matt Forrest Esenwine. Illus. by Fred Koehler. 2017. Astra Young Readers. PreS–K.

Three children perched in a backyard tree house weave increasingly imaginative stories brought to life by the beam of their flashlight. Soft illustrations, rhyming text, and the children's surprising source of creative inspiration wind down this raucous romp for bedtime readers.



**Hello, Moon.** By Julie Downing. Illus. by the author. 2021. Holiday/Neal Porter. PreS–Gr. 1.

Spare but lush text with a lulling cadence reveals the overnight antics of woodland creatures big and small while detailed illustrations invite cozy rereadings with STEM-curious listeners.

**If You Were Night.** By Muon Thi Van. Illus. by Kelly Pousette. 2020. Kids Can. PreS–Gr. 1.

The observer becomes a welcome participant as a child joins nocturnal creatures in their evening activities. Intricate cut-paper dioramas lend an inviting depth to the dark and dreamy illustrations.

**Night Animals.** By Gianna Marino. Illus. by the author. 2015. Viking. PreS–K.

A possum hoping to evade "night animals" is joined by other equally worried crepuscular and nocturnal critters in a nighttime escapade with humorous twists and marvelously expressive illustrations.

**The Night Walk.** By Marie Dorléans. Illus. by the author. 2021. Floris. PreS–Gr. 2.

A middle-of-the-night romp through a pitch-black countryside leads a family to a glittery sky and the first light of dawn. Cobalt hues evoke a dark yet safe adventure, and descriptive language details the journey.

**The Night World.** By Mordicai Gerstein. Illus. by the author. 2015. Little, Brown. PreS–Gr. 1.

A child's cat beckons him into a star-speckled darkness, where shadows reveal beguiling nightlife that transforms before readers' eyes as dawn approaches.

**Nighttime Symphony.** By Timbaland. Illus. by Christopher Myers. 2019. Atheneum. PreS–Gr. 2.

As a bedtime storm rages, an adult reassures a child that the city's sopping sights and sounds are a symphony to lull the child to sleep. A comforting selection for evenings when wet weather puts a damper on outdoor exploration.

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**Kit Ballenger** is a youth services librarian and literary consultant based in Washington, DC. You can hear her book recommendations on SiriusXM Kids Place Live and find out more about her work through her website, www.HelpYourShelf.com.

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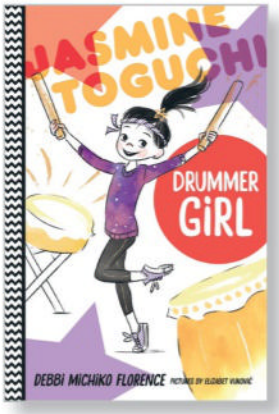





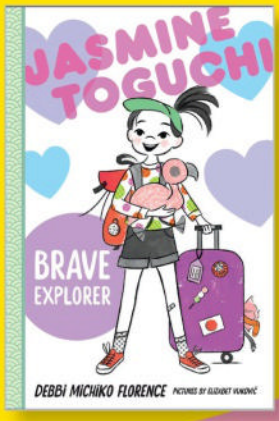


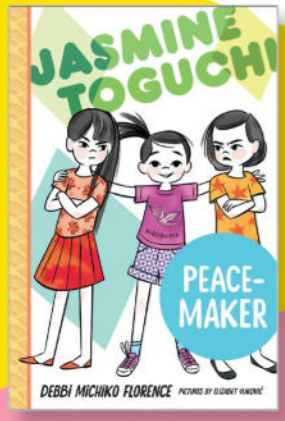


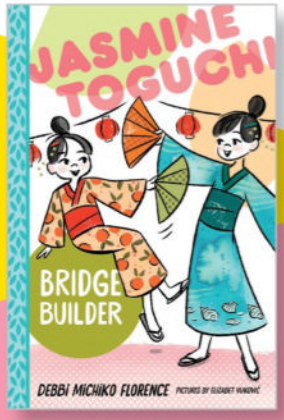

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